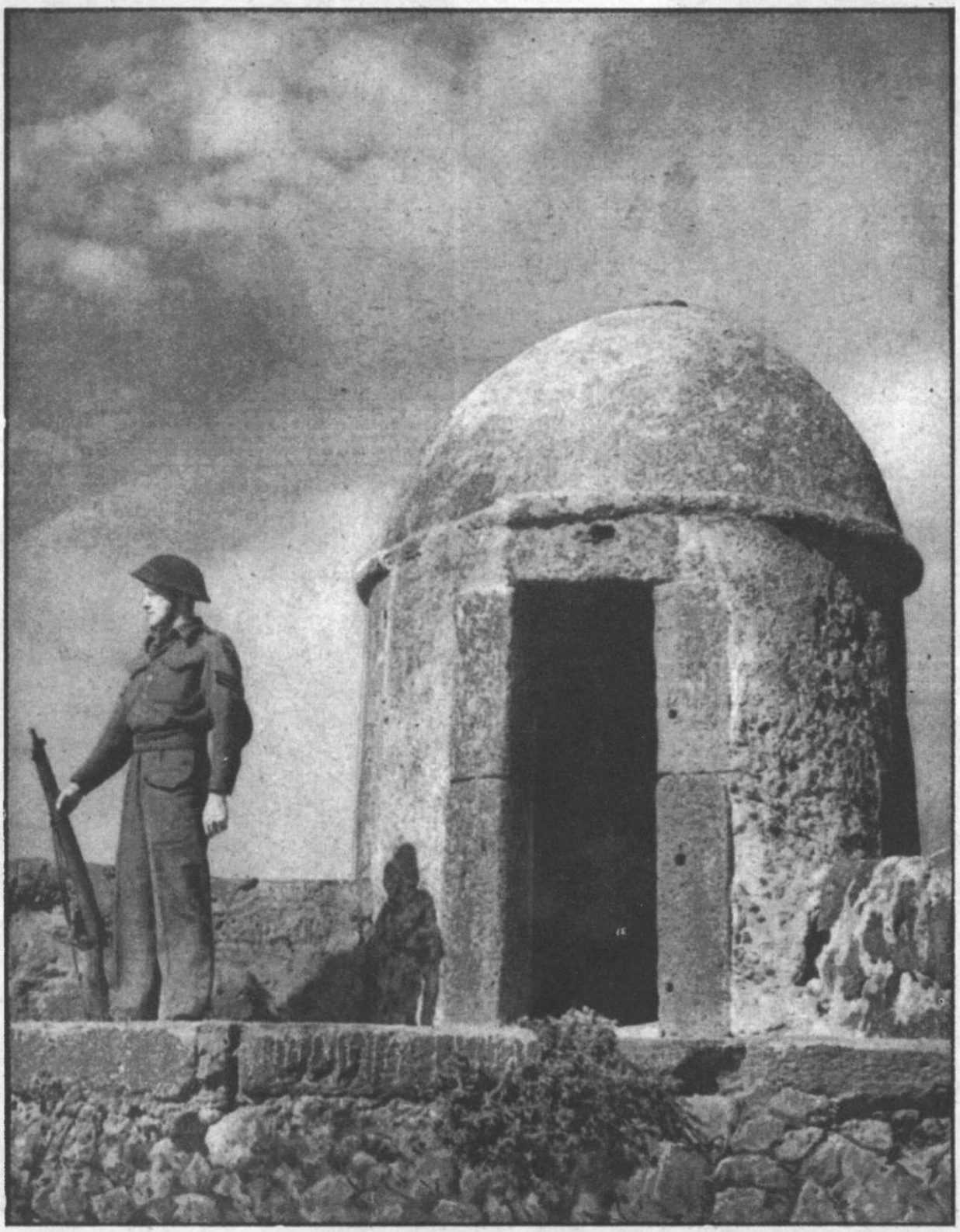
Vol 7 **The War Illustrated** N° 178

SIXPENCE

Edited by Sir John Hammerton

APRIL 14, 1944



ON GUARD IN THE AZORES, Allied mid-Atlantic air base, this corporal of the R.A.F. Regiment strikes a modern note against the ancient stone sentry-box of his observation post. "By means of aircraft operating from the Azores," said Mr. Churchill and Mr. Roosevelt in a joint statement, "we have been able to improve the protection to our convoys and to diminish the area in which enemy U-boats were free from attention by our forces." **See also p. 541.**

Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright

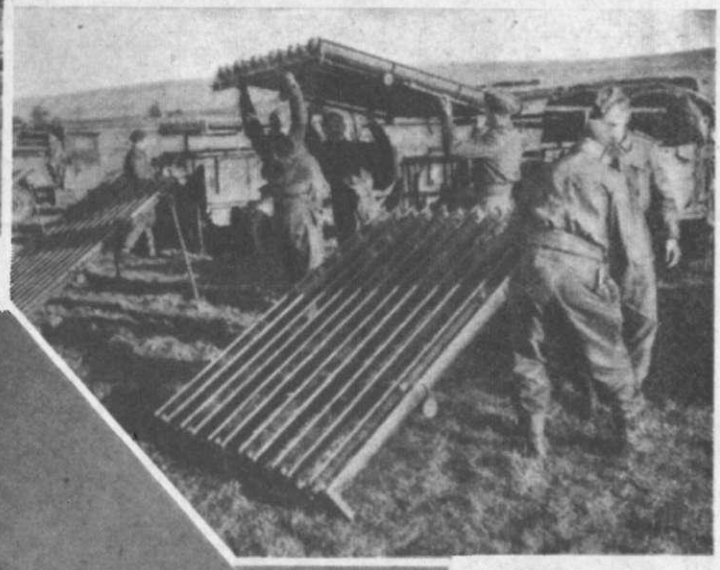
NO. 179 WILL BE PUBLISHED FRIDAY, **APRIL 28**

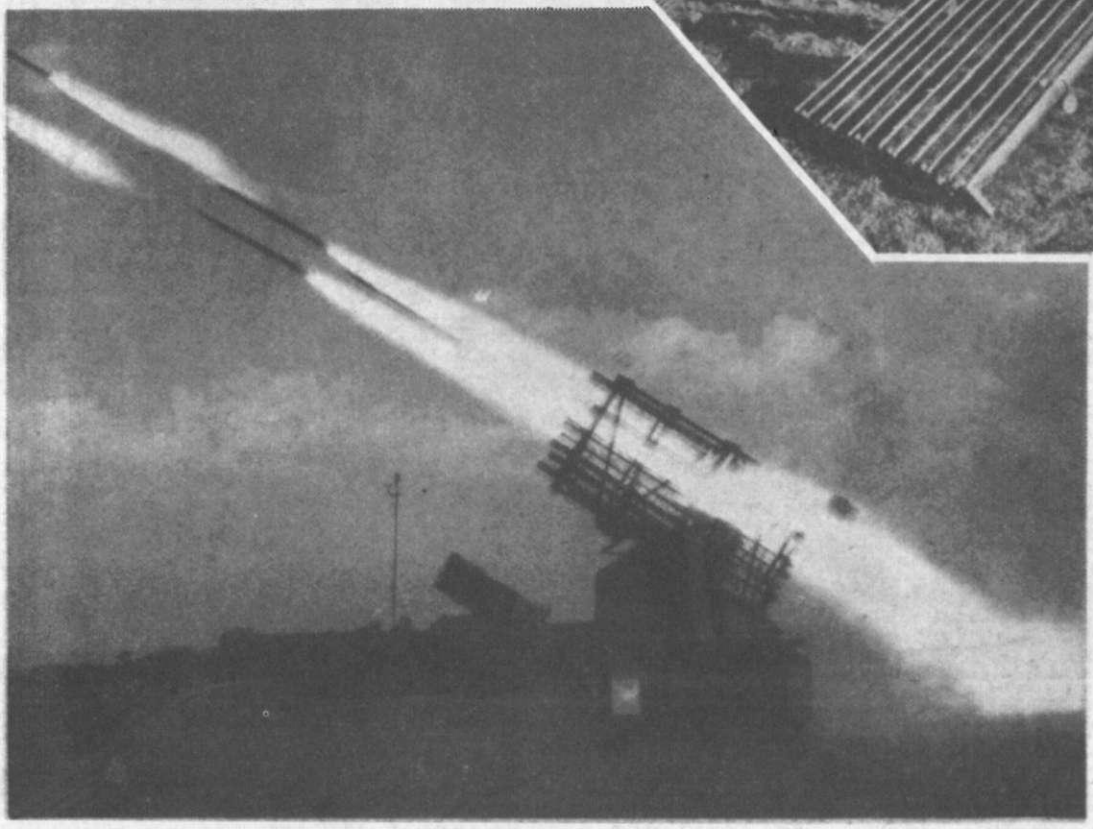
Our Roving Camera Inspects Air Raid Fighters

SEARCHLIGHT projector operator (left) is a member of the A.T.S. Girls snap into action to illumine the targets for the A.A. guns. A.T.S. also serve at fire control instruments, command posts and plotting rooms.

WOMEN SWITCHBOARD OPERATORS at the London Region Fire Control Room, headquarters of the N.F.S. This switchboard is the nerve centre through which the operations officer receives reports of fires and through which he issues his fire-fighting orders.

CIVIL DEFENCE PERSONNEL labour doggedly, with a mobile crane, to clear away debris after a direct hit. Folks may be trapped beneath the rubble masses: men of the Rescue Service attend to these when contact has been made.





ROCKET GUNS of the multiple-barrelled type being unloaded (above) for swift assembly; on its mobile mounting (left) one hurls salvos of rockets into the night sky. Large numbers of batteries are now operating, mostly manned by Home Guards. In its original form the rocket weapon was designed for defence against the low-flying dive-bomber. Salvos were then fired, experimentally, at high-flying night raiders; the first battery went into action in the spring of 1941, and now rocket guns are used with outstanding success against targets whose speed sometimes exceeds 400 miles per hour at 25,000 ft. The propellant, developed in Britain, is also in production in the Middle East, and its secrets have been made known to U.S. Army Ordnance by the British authorities. It is in use in various theatres of operations.

Photos, British Official, Fox, Associated Press

THE BATTLE FRONTS

by E. Royston Pike

RUSSIA A thousand days of the Russian war! Did Hitler realize the sinister significance of March 18, 1944, as he dropped the calendar-leaf into his waste-paper basket? If so, what thoughts of the "might have been" must have surged through his tormented brain, what a load of bitter disappointment and falsified hopes must have weighed down his spirit! A thousand days of fighting, of vast conquests, of tremendous victories: his troops almost within sound of the Kremlin's bells, within sight of the peaks of the Caucasus.

Then the dreadful débâcle of Stalingrad, the beginning of the retreat (of course, then, it was easy to make out that it was just a retirement "according to plan"), the abandonment of the Donetz, the retirement to the Dnieper. And now the guns of Moscow were booming for yet another Russian victory, the greatest of the campaign, perhaps the greatest of the war, a victory which must find a place in any future collection of "decisive battles of the world."

Up to the beginning of March 1944 the Germans in Russia were retreating in good order. Every mile of ground was stubbornly contested, and though Nazi losses were terrific it was unfortunately all too certain that the Red Army too was losing the cream of its young fighting strength. The German commentators breathed an almost audible sigh of relief—"The front of Von Manstein stands firm."

THEIR satisfaction was short lived. On March 4 the 1st Ukrainian Front group of Russian armies under Marshal Zhukov delivered a terrific punch from the direction of Shepetovka. In 24 hours the Russians advanced 30 miles; by March 7 they had reached the suburbs of Tarnopol and had cut the supremely important Lwow-Odessa railway along a 12-mile stretch at Volochisk. Here for the time being the advance was slowed up, though not stayed. Somehow Von Manstein scraped up some reserves from Lwow and pushed them into the gap.

Practically simultaneously another great Russian offensive was launched four or five hundred miles away to the south-east. Here the attackers were General Malinovsky's 3rd Ukrainian Front; and a week's battle, of furious swirling movement, brought them into the Black Sea port of Kherson.

Lieut.-Gen. H. D. G. CRERAR, C.B., D.S.O. (left), now commander of the 1st Canadian Army (in succession to Lieut.-Gen. A. G. L. MacNaughton), seen in Italy with Lieut.-Gen. E. L. M. Burns, O.B.E., M.C., one of his Corps commanders. *Photo, Canadian Official*

Still the amazing Russians had not shot all their bolts. Another group, the 2nd Ukrainian Front under Marshal Koniev, on March 10 attacked the Germans in the Uman sector, about half-way between the other two offensives, and in a series of forced marches swept through Uman, abandoned by the Germans in what was described by the Russians for the first time as a panic flight, to the banks of the Bug.

Here Manstein's men might have been expected to halt and recover. The river was broad, and swollen with spring floods. On every side the black earth district was a morass of mud, and military commentators spoke knowingly of difficulties engendered by the thaw. But the Russians showed that they had taken the measure of "General Mud." Driving their tanks and transports through the squelching mass, they covered a dozen or even twenty miles a day, driving the enemy before them. They reached the Bug, they crossed it on March 15, they pursued the broken foe beyond it to where the Dniester suggested another line on which some sort of stand might be made.

From the Bug to the Dniester is a matter of fifty miles. The Russians covered the distance in a couple of days. The fact speaks volumes as to the wholesale rout of Manstein's divisions, their disorganization, perhaps even their disintegration. But not, it would seem, their collapsing morale. The number of prisoners claimed by the Russians was significantly small. The Nazis, or most of them, were still resisting fiercely, though their resistance was that of men who have no longer any hope of victory, but who fear defeat more than death. All the same, the Russians captured 200 tanks intact, which suggests that for a time at least the enemy thought only of flight.

OUR distinguished military commentator, Maj.-Gen. Sir Charles Gwynn, K.C.B., D.S.O., has unfortunately had to undergo an operation recently which must, for a time, prevent his maintaining his regular contribution to our pages. We hope, however, that after the lapse of a few issues he may be able to resume that long series of authoritative reviews on the War situation which has become an established and greatly appreciated feature of THE WAR ILLUSTRATED.—Ed.

MARCH 18 was the 1,000th day of the war, and the Russians were in jubilant mood as they announced from Moscow another series of tremendous victories. Koniev's 2nd Ukrainian Front had captured Yampol on the northern bank of the Dniester, and looked across the 400 yards of river to the cottages of the Bessarabian villages on the farther bank. Malinovsky's 3rd Ukrainian Front had completely smashed the German 6th Army—reformed since Paulus' surrender at Stalingrad a year earlier. Marshal Zhukov's 1st Ukrainians had taken Zmerinka, on the Odessa-Lwow railway, and in honour of their victory Moscow guns fired a dozen salvos. During the preceding fortnight the German casualties (said Moscow) totalled almost a quarter of a million, of whom 100,000 were dead.

It was indeed a great victory, and the Russians were swift to exploit it. The Germans attempting to cross the Dniester were mercilessly harried, and their massed transport, awaiting their ferries, was bombed and bombed again by the Stormoviks. Then, on March 19, the Red Army crossed the river in strength, some of the bridges having been captured intact before the German demolition squads could get to work. Koniev got his tanks across, and within a few hours they were deep into Bessarabia.

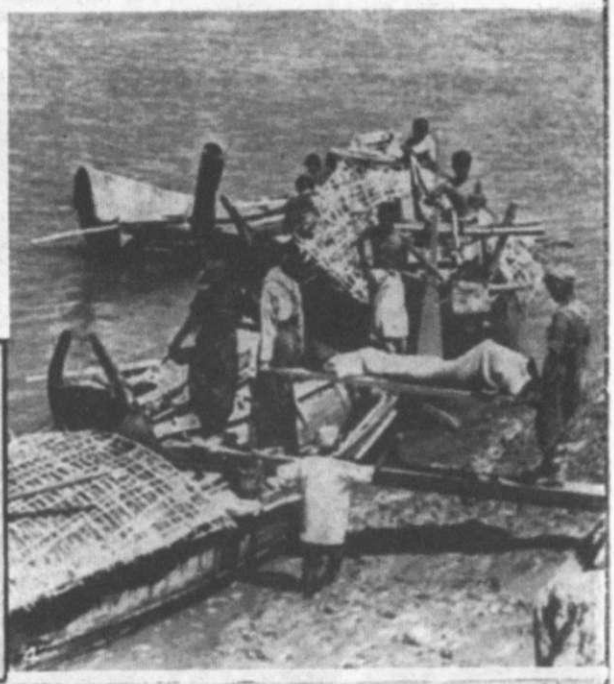
VICTORY FLAG OVER SATTELBERG, New Guinea, Japanese stronghold captured by the Australians on Nov. 26, 1943. Hoisting the flag is Sgt. T. C. Derrick, V.C., D.C.M., who silenced 10 enemy machine-gun posts and made this victory possible. His V.C. is the 14th to be won by an Australian in this war. *Photo, Sport & General*

WHEREUPON all Hitler's satellites in the Balkans shivered with apprehension. Rumanian quislings started packing their bags. Pro-ally—or so they would like it to be deemed—Rumanians and Bulgars and Hungarians got ready to depart on peace missions to the Allies. Hitler found his south-eastern wall collapsing, the battle for the Danube about to begin; and on March 21 his troops converted Hungary and her neighbours into militarily occupied countries such as France had been since 1940. March 21—another fateful anniversary. It was on that day in 1918 that the Kaiser's hosts plunged through the mists on the Somme to overwhelm General Gough's Fifth Army and, so the Germans boasted, win the war. But November 11 was only eight months ahead.

BURMA While the world-shaking battle was raging across the plains of southern Russia a very different struggle was developing in the Burmese jungles. In March both the Japanese and the Allies were making offensives, although in widely separated zones. From the north, Gen. Stilwell's little army of Americans and Chinese was developing a pincer movement down the Hukawng valley against Myitkyina, the Japanese key base on the Irrawaddy. About a hundred miles to the south a force of British airborne troops was endeavouring to get astride the railway and river communications of Myitkyina (see p. 708 for Burma front illustrations).

In the Chin hills, still more to the south, the Japanese were hitting at British and Indian forces guarding the approach to India. Judged on the scale of the Burma campaign this was a major offensive; but many more troops were fighting near Cassino in Italy than there were in the whole of Burma.

With Our 14th Army in Japanese-Held Burma



JUNGLE AIR BASE and Army stronghold for the Allies were established when an airborne force seized Japanese-occupied territory in Upper Burma, it was announced on March 17, 1944. Air Marshal Sir John E. A. Baldwin, C.-in-C. Tactical Air Force of Eastern Command (1, right). A Vengeance dive-bomber returns to its Arakan base (5). Ghurka riflemen (3) who escaped from a Japanese ambush and saved the battalion treasure chest. Men of the 1st Punjab Regt. in a forward position (2). A casualty is carried aboard a hospital sampan (4).
Photos, Indian Official and Keystone

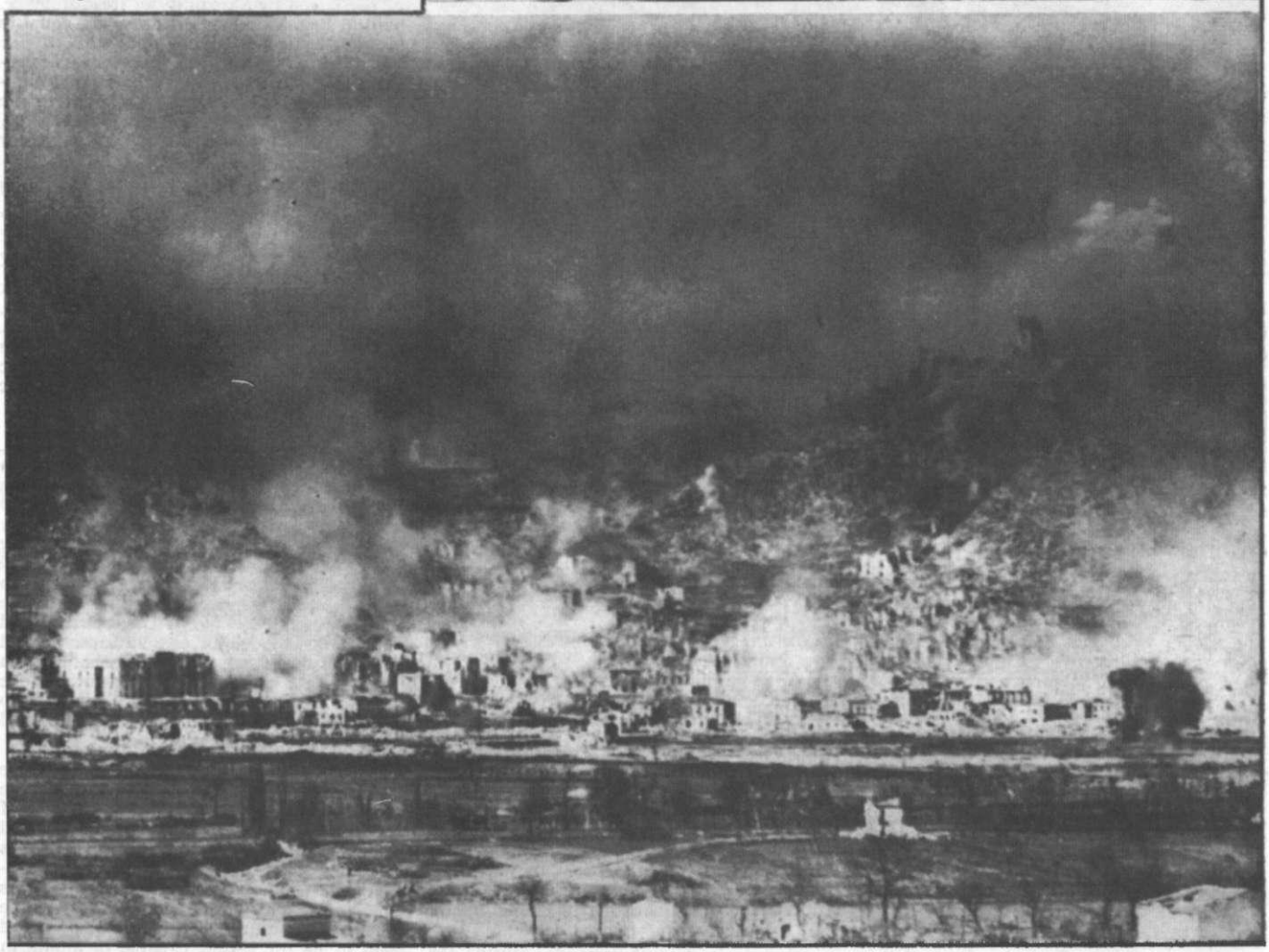
Bloody is the Fighting for the Ruins of Cassino

IN THE STREETS and in the hills around Cassino, on March 29, 1944, the 5th Army were fighting with utmost gallantry against an enemy fanatically defending a position which, after weeks of battle, had on March 15, 1944, been pounded to a mass of rubble by our bombers and artillery in attacks of a scale unprecedented for a target of comparable size. Cassino, strategically placed and well adapted for defence, has long held up the Allied forces. Beyond it lies the road to Rome.

Chief among the German troops whose lives are daily being thrown away in its defence, are the men of the 1st Parachute Regiment, whom our Forces first encountered at Ortona, in Italy. There they put up a house-to-house defence when they were assailed by the 8th Army in December 1943. Now their numbers are dwindling—and they are soldiers of a quality which cannot be replaced from the Nazi reserves.

In the words of one of our war correspondents in a recent cable home : "Dogged resistance and skill of concealment are part of the German parachutist's make-up. They are street-fighting specialists. Here are two examples of the kind of fight they put up : "One German unit was buried in a cellar on the day of the great Allied bombardment. It took them four days to extricate themselves. Instead of retiring exhausted, they set about building a strong-point in the rubble in which they had been buried . . . A New Zealand unit took 50 German prisoners from a house in Cassino. When they returned to the house after handing over their prisoners, they found another 50 Germans in possession."

Prolongation of the bitter fighting is due in large measure to lengthy tunnels deep beneath the town, some of these forming connexions between series of strongpoints among the rubble and all of them providing the Nazi troops with protection against even our heaviest bombardments.



EVERY UNIT OF ALLIED AIR POWER in the Mediterranean area was concentrated in the greatest air attack ever delivered against so small a target when they shattered the city of Cassino (below). Immediately after the bombing, British and U.S. artillery added a terrific barrage to complete the destruction of the ancient stone buildings which still concealed and protected enemy gun emplacements. Into the maelstrom went these Allied patrol vehicles (above), among which were Red Cross units bearing their flag of mercy. *Photos, U.S. Official*

THE WAR AT SEA

by **Francis E. McMurtrie**

SEVERAL weeks after the completion of the operation, the Admiralty released particulars of the destruction of six U-boats in the Atlantic by the Second Escort Group. This group comprised the war-built sloops Starling, Kite, Magpie, Wild Goose and Woodpecker, under the command of Captain F. J. Walker, R.N., as senior officer (see page 711). Before the war Captain Walker was in command of the experimental anti-submarine establishment at Portland, and the theories which he then formed have been carried into practice with great success in the past eighteen months, more U-boats having been destroyed by the Second Escort Group than by any other.

Over a period of 20 days the sloops repeatedly made contact with U-boats before these could attack the convoys they were guarding. In five instances persistent depth charging resulted in the destruction of the enemy submarines under water, evidence in the shape of wreckage and bodies being seen floating. In the sixth case, the submarine was forced to surface after five and a half hours of depth charging and was engaged by the guns of the Starling, Captain Walker's vessel. Her crew at once abandoned ship, the U-boat sinking stern first immediately afterwards. Altogether 51 survivors were rescued and made prisoners. H.M.S. Woodpecker was hit by a torpedo, and afterwards foundered ; but not a casualty was incurred.

SUCH successes as these illustrate the results of the system which is now employed to repel submarine attacks on shipping. Though it is partly the fruit of experience, it could not be carried into effect were it not that an ample force of escort vessels—destroyers, sloops, frigates and corvettes—is now available, as the result of the immense programme of warship construction that has been in progress in this country and the United States for three years past. All the time these vessels are increasing in numbers, whereas the destruction of U-boats during 1943 was so considerable that the total available remained more or less stationary.

HEROIC Son of a Naval Captain Proves that Heredity Counts

Furthermore, personnel of the escort craft have continued to gain valuable experience during this time. That they have thus reached a very high standard of efficiency in submarine hunting is illustrated by the latest exploits of the Second Escort Group, as briefly related. Captain Walker, whose fine record of service has gained him the C.B. and the D.S.O., is in his forty-eighth year. He is the son of a captain in the Royal Navy, evidence that heredity sometimes counts.

A HANDSHAKE FROM THE COMMANDER of the sloop H.M.S. Aberdeen obviously pleases the dog, which was found floating on timber miles out in the Atlantic after the French merchant vessel which had owned it had been torpedoed. Adopted by the Aberdeen as ship's mascot, it was promptly christened " H.M.V.," as when rescued it was sitting in the same position as the well-known gramophone record advertisement dog. *Photo, British Official*

FORTUNATELY, Japan is in no position to build warships in such large numbers as the Allies have done, She is thus constrained to watch her fine mercantile fleet gradually dwindling as the result of the excessive demands made on it by war in the Pacific and Indian Oceans. Had it remained intact, the task of maintaining communications with the Dutch Indies, the Philippines, Burma, Siam, Malaya, and the various island groups seized by the Japanese in 1941-42, would still have taxed its capabilities. As it is, the losses inflicted by Allied surface warships, submarines and aircraft are believed to have reduced the total tonnage available by at least one-third ; and as time goes on Allied naval and air strength expands, causing the rate of loss to rise. For such important results the losses sustained by the United States Navy's submarine flotillas cannot be considered unduly heavy. Up to the time of writing they include 23 units, all but four of them of modern design.

Since the number of new submarines launched last year from American shipyards was about sixty, there is little consolation to be found by the enemy in the destruction of about one-third of that number in a space of over twice that period. No doubt General Tojo had these facts in mind when he told Parliament in Tokyo on March 22, 1944, that the situation had become " extraordinarily acute." He had just learned of the annihilation of yet another convoy of reinforcements and supplies dispatched to Wewak, the main Japanese base in New Guinea. At this rate it will not be long before that port will be in as hopeless a position as Rabaul in New Britain, and Kavieng in New Ireland, both of which are now cut off from succour and are under frequent bombardment by the Allied fleet. When these strongholds are eliminated, it will be the turn of Truk. Now that the Japanese airfield at Lorengau, in the Admiralty group, has been taken, and the remaining atolls in the Marshalls are falling one by one, it should soon be possible to bring Truk under attack by shore-based aircraft as well as carrier-borne planes.

SHIPS Built in Britain and U.S. for Transfer to Red Fleet

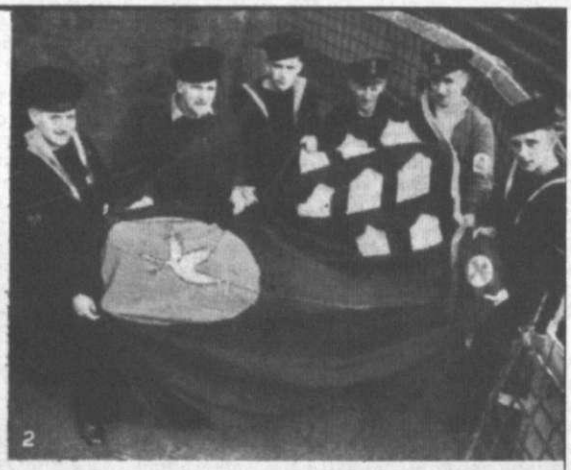
A good deal of interest was aroused by the report that the Soviet Government was about to take over one-third of the Italian fleet now operating with the Allies. This appears to have arisen through a misreading of some remarks by President Roosevelt, who actually intended to imply that the Red Fleet was to be reinforced by a quantity of fresh tonnage, built in British and American yards, equal in the aggregate to about one-third of the Italian total. Already a number of mine-sweepers, motor-torpedo-boats and submarine chasers have been transferred to the Russian flag from the United States Navy, and more ships will follow in the near future.

It would seem that the question was raised in the first instance by the Soviet Government, which is anxious to replace its naval losses. No official statement of these has appeared, but there is reason to believe that the cruiser Krasni Krim has been sunk in the Black Sea ; and it is possible that her sister ship, the Chervonaya Ukraina, has also been lost. A good many destroyers and submarines have also become casualties, and the enemy have claimed that two of the cruisers in the Baltic have been sunk.

THERE are three old battleships, the Marat, Oktiabrskaya Revolutia and Pariskaya Kommuna, dating from 1911, which are long overdue for replacement. The first-named is believed to have been badly damaged by German air attacks on Kronstadt during 1942. In these circumstances it may well have been suggested that three Italian battleships, of approximately the same age and displacement, but reconstructed and modernized throughout, should be earmarked for replacement of the three old Russian ships. These three Italian vessels are the Andrea Doria, Caio Duilio and Giulio Cesare, all of which submitted to Allied control at Malta last September.

At the moment there does not appear to be any particular use for battleships in the Soviet Navy, except for bombardment of German-held coasts in the Gulf of Finland or in the Black Sea ; and for such purposes the Italian ships could hardly be made available while Denmark and the Aegean islands remain in enemy hands. Actually, the principal Russian need at the moment would seem to be for vessels capable of aiding in the escort of convoys to the White Sea, such as cruisers, destroyers, sloops, frigates and minesweepers.

5 British Sloops Sink 6 U-Boats in 20 Days



MOST TRIUMPHANT U-BOAT HUNT OF THE WAR recently ended with a tremendous welcome home for the sloop H.M.S. Starling (1), whose Captain Walker, C.B., D.S.O., R.N., is seen on the bridge taking a hasty snack whilst in action (3, right). Four other sloops of the Second Escort Group, commanded by Capt. Walker, assisted in the sinking of six U-boats within 20 days; an exploding depth charge from H.M.S. Kite throws up a great column of water (4), and the crew of H.M.S. Wild Goose display their battle-flag (2). See p. 710. *Photos, British Official; Topical*

The Fleet Oiler Waits On Our Fighting Ships

Her cargo is crude oil for the big ships' furnaces, and petrol for the planes they carry, or for the brood of an aircraft carrier. A warship may be stranded without fuel, unable to steam, steer, or anchor—a sitting shot for the enemy ; all its hopes are then placed in the speedy services of one of these Handmaidens of the Navy, whose work is described by CAPT. FRANK H. SHAW.

THERE is one type of ship which seldom gets the credit she deserves, although without her the Navy would be to all intents and purposes immobilized. The role played by the Fleet Oiler is unique, for she differs considerably from the coal-burning Navy's colliers. Seldom was the necessary fuel transferred from ship to ship in open sea ; coaling was a laborious, messy and difficult task at anchor ; at sea, with a wind blowing, it was practically impossible.

The oiler has changed all that. By her sturdy work she enables the fighting ships to perform exceptional voyages, lengthens their capacity of action, and generally keeps them tended. Her 12,000 tons of invaluable oil is always at the Navy's service ; and if the battleships, cruisers and destroyers cannot break off their duties to come to her, she simply lifts her anchors and goes—at full speed—to them.

Normally she lies, well-hidden, in some lonely loch or fjord with a perpetual brood of hungry vessels nuzzling at her, for all the world like a sow with her litter. She is officially listed as a Fleet Auxiliary, being both Royal Navy and Merchant Navy, and her crew is hand-picked, because specialists are needed to perform the oiler's onerous tasks. It is man's work to bring a laden oiler alongside a towering battleship in a seaway, when both vessels are sheering awkwardly under helm, and high seas are doing their utmost to frustrate the necessary union.

Yet the warships must have oil—not only heavy oil to feed their furnaces, but high octane spirit to fill all the tanks of the planes carried. Or an aircraft carrier may demand attention. Also the oiler acts to some extent as general supply ship to the mobile fleet : she serves as mail-boat, beef-boat, canteen filer. Also, possessing as she usually does, a commodious sick-bay with an adequate personnel of doctors and sick-berth stewards, she can, on occasion, serve as a useful clearing hospital for casualties which need more specialized care than is obtainable aboard a fighting ship liable to meet hot action every time smoke is spotted on the skyline.

AN oiler's existence when at her moorings in shelter can be prosaic and monotonous. For lonely harbours are usually selected, so that refuelling warships can come and go without interfering with normal traffic ; but there is always the variety of some ship, great or small, appearing out of nowhere with a peremptory demand for the precious fluid that is the Navy's life-blood. And the people of such client-ships usually have interesting stories to tell, of breathless attacks from the air, of bombardments of enemy coasts, of sorties on stealthy convoys, of pitched battles between giant-ship and giant-ship off Norwegian coasts.

The close-packed crews of destroyers and corvettes like to clamber aboard and stretch their cramped legs in the spaciousness of the oiler, although her lean, low decks are hampered by countless gadgets designed for quick action in refuelling. Although, when moored, immune from the actual hazards of seagoing, the daily—sometimes hourly—arrivals bring the tang of spindrift with them ; as often as not they are ice-coated and bleached from constant battling with unfriendly seas, and every man-Jack aboard the visitors is eager for mail. So that a friendly atmosphere prevails all around. There is a sort of motherliness about the oiler, offering a cordial welcome home.

There is nothing outstandingly beautiful about these glorified tankers. Indeed, with engines and funnels aft, a long expanse of deck, broken only by the midships superstructure of the bridge and officers' accommodation, she is ugly, looking draggled and sluttish alongside the sleek, razor-lined craft that come to her. She is strictly utilitarian. But her crew know their job inside out, by day and by night, for when a warship needs fuel she usually needs it in a hurry. And, as Nelson said, five minutes might spell the difference between defeat and victory. Lights may not be exhibited ; the coupling of oil-hose has very often to be done in black darkness, with rain sluicing like Niagara, or snow falling almost impenetrably.

Decks too Hot to Walk Upon

The atmosphere aboard the oiler is close and oppressive, especially below, for, as any moment might bring a call for what she carries, the liquid fuel must be kept liquid by the steampipes interspersing the giant tanks. For crude oil such as is used in ships' furnaces solidifies if not kept at a certain temperature ; and it can happen that the decks are actually too hot to walk upon. Refuelling whilst at anchor is a simple matter in many ways : it merely means that the linking hose-pipes must be attached to the warships' intakes, and the pumps set going for as long as is necessary to rebunker.

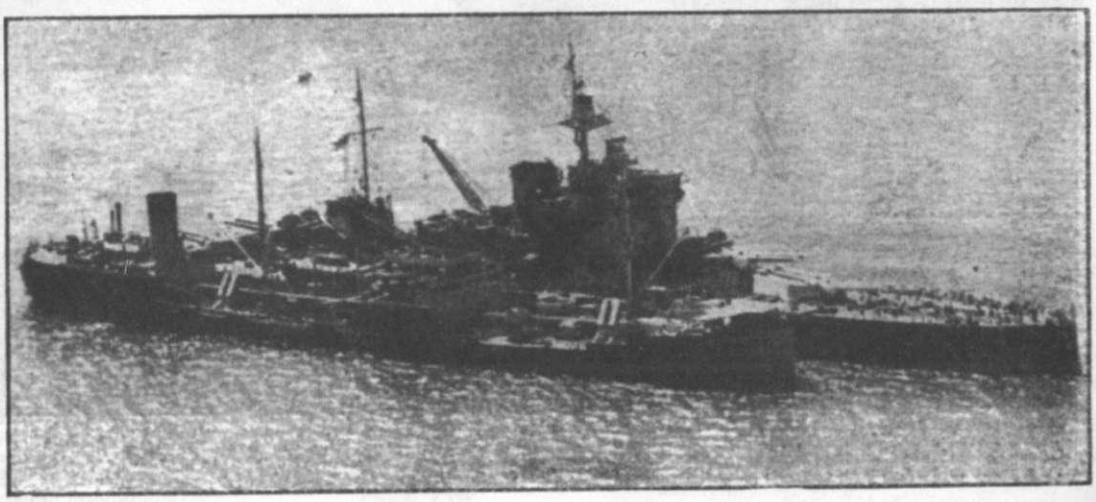
There is, of course, a constant liability to attack from the air, since the enemy's reconnaissance aircraft are over quite often. If an oiler can be sunk, it means delay in the movements of the ships dependent on her. And during that delay, commerce-raiders might break through the cordon and escape to open sea, where an infinite amount of damage can be wrought. So the oiler is well-armed, though her guns seem as if fitted as an afterthought ; they do not blend into her outlines in the same way as do those of fighting ships. But they are not the less efficacious on that account ; they have brought down diving raiders wholesale.

It is frequently necessary for the fleet oiler to leave her moorings and steam to a busier port to replenish her supplies and be overhauled. She needs to go warily on such voyages, for the lurking U-boat is very watchful, and she would be a good prize for the scurrying E-boats that are always waiting on opportunity. Since the oiler usually owns a good turn of speed, escorts are not considered essential ; and in case of attack she occasionally has to fight her own way through such hazards as may offer.

THE fact that enemy surface ships are more or less penned in to close waters limits the oiler's activities. To maintain the tireless patrol of the misted Northern seas demands much steady steaming ; but not much of it is performed at high speed, for high speed devours oil greedily. The great battleships and the tiny corvettes alike can usually manage to make port before supplies run out. But it can happen that a warship, detached on duty, runs short of fuel ; and when that happens the fleet oiler has to go to the customer.

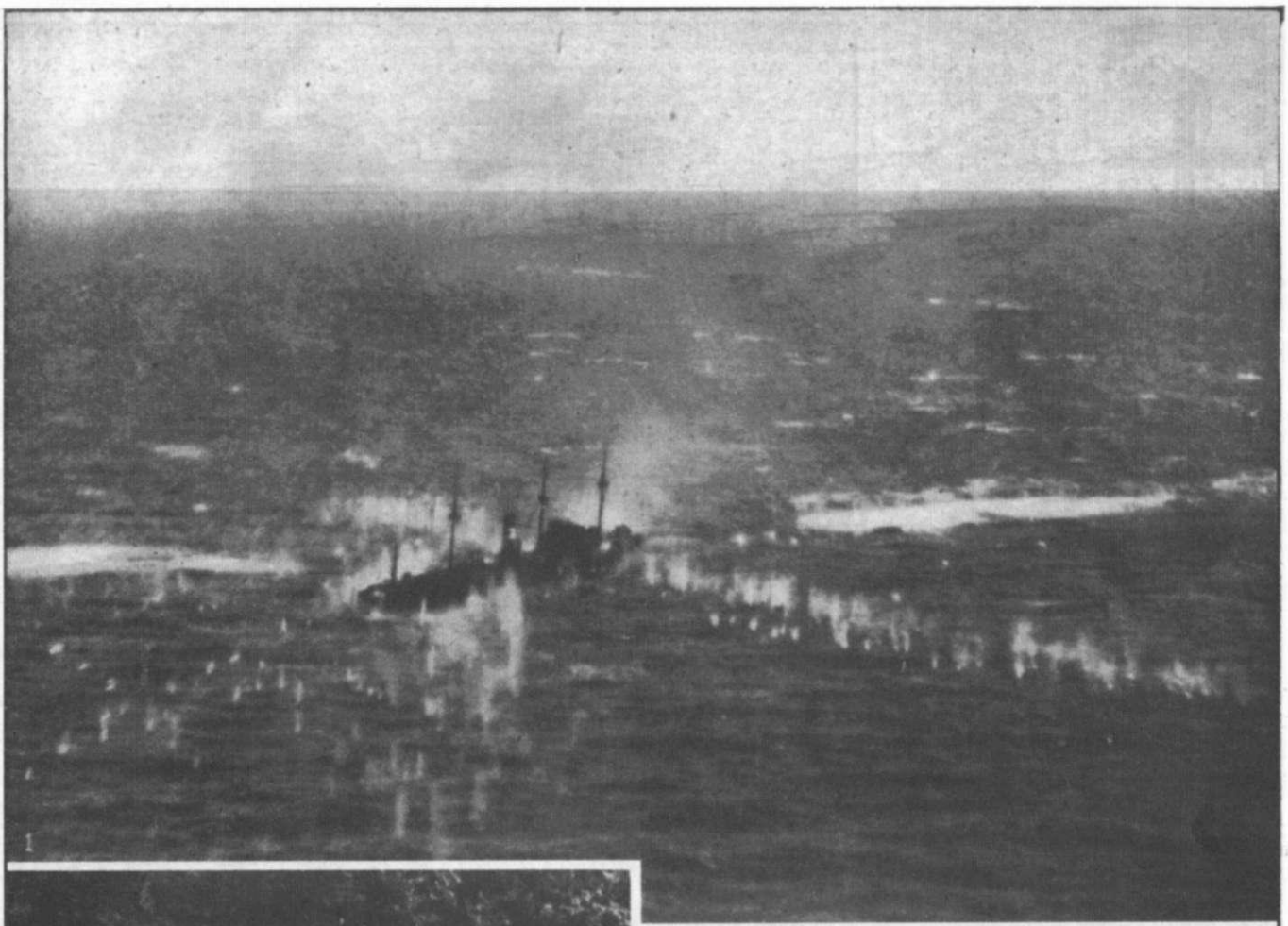
The fleet oiler's navigation staff is superexcellent. They must be so, to locate that trivial pinpoint presented by a small ship in the middle of a mighty sea. For the most part wireless silence must be maintained, in case the location of the warship is betrayed to the enemy ; at night time "darken-ship" is the order. Only infinitesimal lights may be shown at the best of times. Once the "dry" ship is spotted, expert seamanship is necessary to bring the two alongside ; and mooring gear of superior quality must be employed to hold them together, with great fenders dropped between hull and hull to take the chafe of the rubbing, grinding sides.

It is when sea-warfare finds wider fields than the narrow waters of the North that the fleet oiler shows her outstanding value. It often happens that a fleet of big ships must steam many thousands of miles at high speed to perform a vital mission. She must accompany the fleet or steam out from harbour to intercept it at a signal ; and she must, ranging alongside ship after empty ship, replenish their stores. Such a task means long working hours for the crew. In occasional instances the battle formation of the fleet cannot be disturbed, and the refuelling must take place at night, in total darkness, with the ships reeling drunkenly. Crude oil for the fires, refined petrol for the aircraft : no wonder the oiler is called the Handmaiden of the Navy.



THROUGH FEED-PIPES connecting the fleet oiler and H.M.S. Warspite (right) the life-blood of the Royal Navy flows. On the services of the tanker the several successes of the Warspite have depended, as is the case with other of our fighting ships in this war.
Photo, British Official

Beaufighters Blast Enemy Merchant Shipping



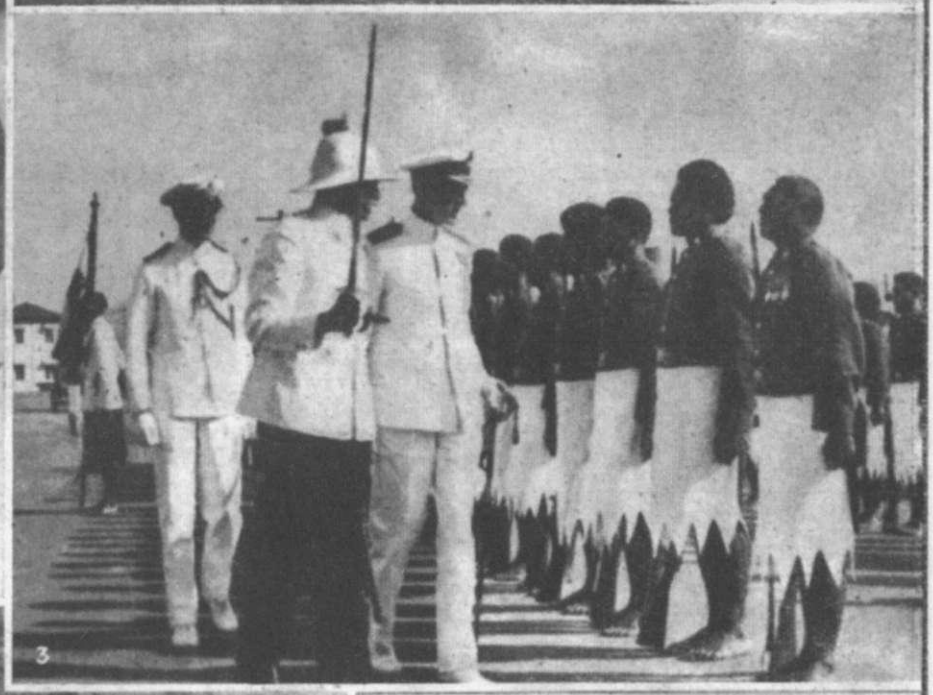
CENTRE OF CONCENTRATED CANNON FIRE from Beaufighters of R.A.F. Coastal Command escorted by Spitfires of the Air Defence of Great Britain, this enemy merchantman (1) is one of several attended to off the Dutch coast on March 1, 1944 ; near misses are registered (3) as torpedo-carrying Beaufighters take up the attack; later, two torpedoes struck home. In the Aegean also our Beaufighters are busy ; a well-aimed bomb has wiped this vessel (2) off the active list. *Photos, British Official*

Britain's Colonies in the War: No. 5—Fiji

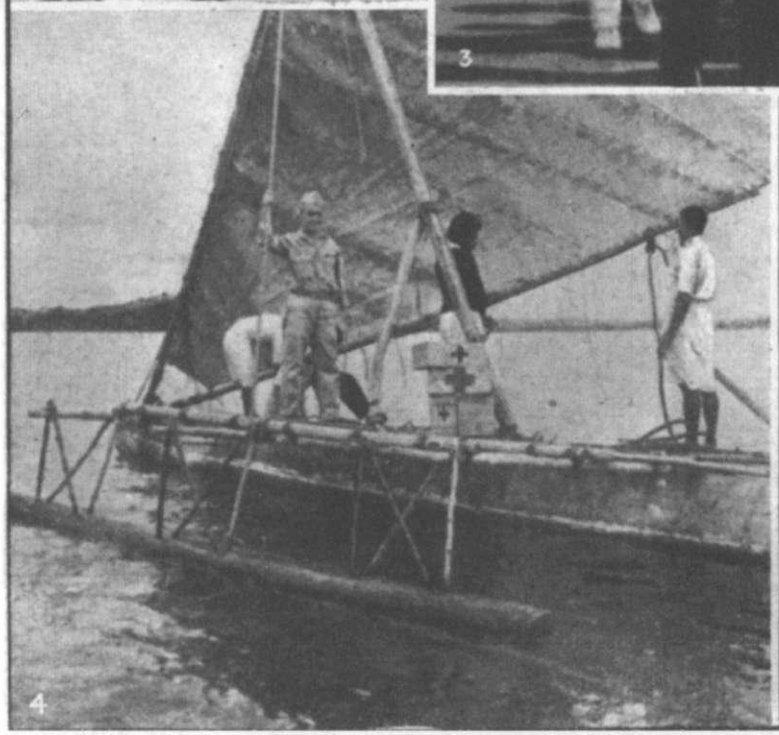
PACIFIC paradise in peacetime, large areas of the Fiji Islands are now training-grounds in tropical warfare for U.S. troops. The map below shows Fiji's strategic importance; its productiveness is symbolized in the Colony's arms (left). Of immense value to the Allies are the 70,000 tons of sugar and 15,000 tons of copra exported annually to U.S.A., Canada and New Zealand. Native soldiers of the Fiji Defence Force are here (3) being inspected. Among islanders decorated is Corporal Druma (2), Fiji Labour Corps; he won the B.E.M. for bravery. Outrigger canoes (4) keep isolated American units supplied. Islanders give to the Red Cross, for which a carnival in Suva (1), raised £5,000.

1

2

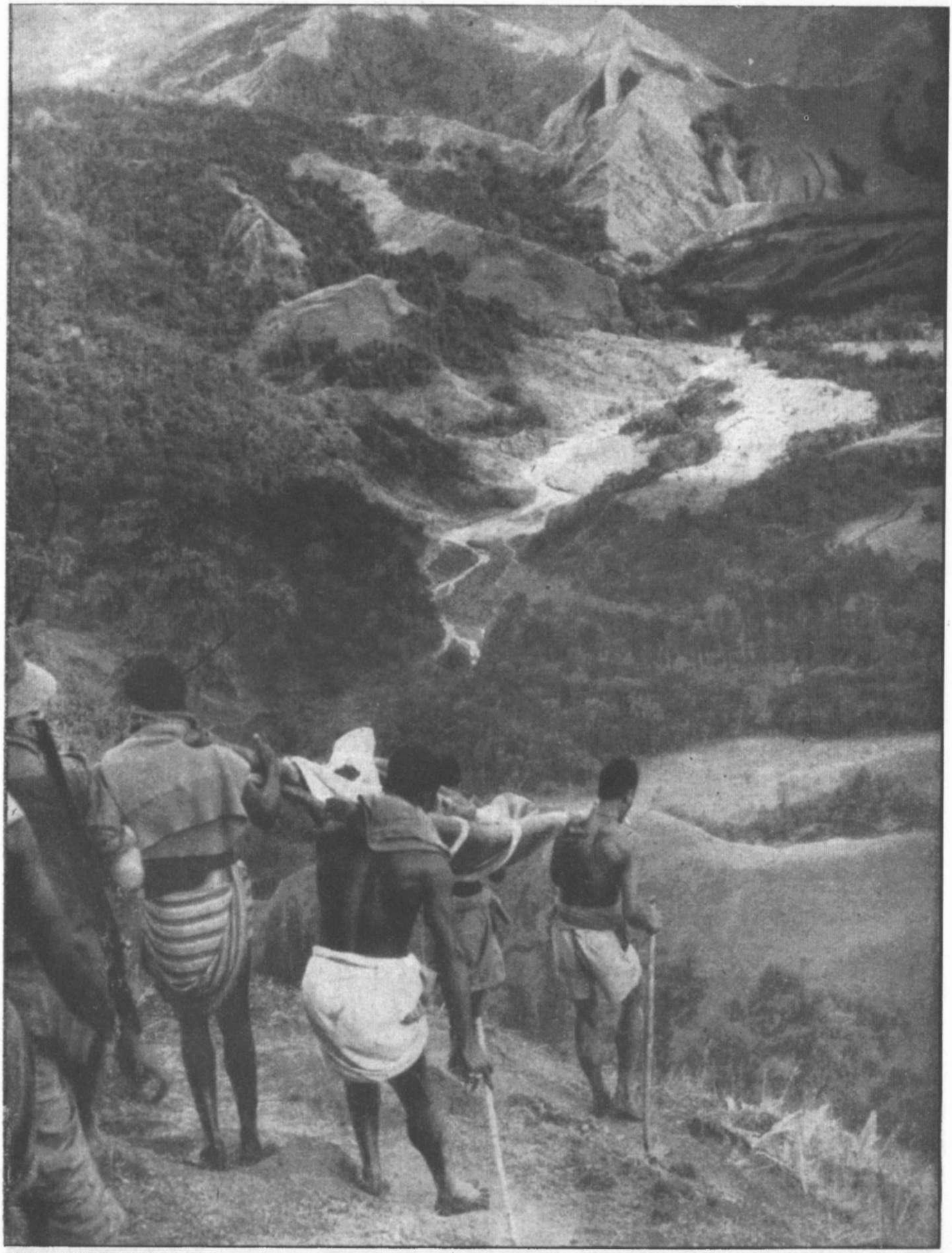


3



4

Australians Ejected the Japanese From These Hills



NEW GUINEA NATIVES, with sure-footed care for the casualties they carry, act as stretcher-bearers down the slopes of Shaggy Ridge in the Finisterre Range; far below is the Faria River, with Ramu Valley beyond. Australian forces driving on from Sio, on the Huon Peninsula, which they captured on Jan. 16, 1944, threw out the Japanese from their Finisterre strongholds and by Feb. 10 had joined up with U.S. troops near the American beach-head at Saidor, 55 miles south-east of Madang.

Photo, Australian Official

Mighty Sky-Freighters Sway the Fortunes of War

The entire picture of military operations has been transformed by transports of the air. They take to the Allied front lines the requirements of battle—men, guns, ammunition, food and water—and race back with the wounded. They can turn a last desperate stand into a resounding triumph, as MARK PRIESTLEY vigorously recounts in this article.

SOME of the fighting officers of R.A.F. Transport Command call the giant Avro York "Noah's Ark." They watch jeeps drive up the gangway of the 30-ton freighter plane and pack two by two into the plane's long interior. Smoothly the flying pantechnicons take to the air, cruise at 275 m.p.h., and presently land their cargoes at airfields that only a short time before were held by the enemy.

Capt. **RICHARD ALLEN** Piloting a Liberator run by British Overseas Airways Corporation and carrying a maximum load, he reduced the record of flying time from Montreal to Britain to 11 hours 35 minutes.

Wing Cmdr. **LANCE WADE** Before his death in Italy, on Jan. 1, 1944, in a communications aircraft, he had destroyed 25 enemy planes. His decorations include the D.S.O., D.F.C., and two bars.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright; Planet News

Air superiority is now a phrase implying far more than fighting supremacy. It stands for war strength in sealed packages, for guns and ammunition, crated Spitfires, and even aero engines flown direct to the battle line. In every theatre of war today Allied transport planes are delivering armies and keeping them supplied, carrying everything from water to love-letters, whisking up reinforcements and racing wounded back from the forward areas.

The American landings on the Marshall Islands were backed by a flood of such mighty freighters as the wooden Curtis Caravan, four-engined Lockheed Constellations and 70-ton Mars cargo flying boats. The landings on Italy were speeded directly and indirectly by transport aircraft. When Air Force Signals were putting Tripoli and Tunisia on the telephone to link all arms for immediate co-operation, key equipment was flown from England in 24 hours. Communications were established and forward squadrons and ground forces gained an advantage that has paved the road to Rome.

In these and many other ways the new era of troop and supply transport has recast the entire military picture of war. In a recent engagement, a transport pilot tipped the scales by delivering sorely needed anti-tank ammunition on time and in time. Only air transport could have done it.

In New Guinea the scene was changed over-night when every plane that could fly was ordered to the rescue of Kokoda. Outnumbered five to one, the battered but valiant 39th Battalion of Australians was making its last stand when air transport turned the tide. Guns and mortars, tins of beef and crates of blood plasma, boxes of ammunition and bundles of brown mosquito netting were dropped to the fighters on the ground. The tide of battle turned; within a month the Japanese advance had ended.

On the day the Australians took Gona village at bayonet point, hundreds of Americans were flown in to back them. One tiny strip of jungle averaged 59 transport landings a day. And the planes never returned empty. But for aircraft, wounded men would have taken two months to reach Port Moresby from the Buna front and many would have died on the way. The transports switched the wounded of the dawn attacks into modern operating theatres before midday.

The casualties removed from Italy by air constitute a high proportion of the total (see illus. p. 687). It is now no secret that R.A.F. Transport Command conveyed 14,898 patients from Sicily in a month. Many of the planes were air ambulances proper, others were twin-engined transports fitted with removable racks for stretchers. Outward bound the planes fly food, equipment and even oil to the front lines; homeward bound they evacuate sick and wounded men with organized and in all ways admirable efficiency.

On one occasion, 21 R.A.F. nursing sisters were moved 500 miles by "airmail" to render them available for a new hospital. Mobile field hospitals, complete with staff and equipment, are commonly flown across the Mediterranean. Air transport has cut the route back to Britain from Egypt or Africa by 6,000 miles, and the York aircraft which recently flew from the United Kingdom to Cairo in 18 hours was no more than making a routine flight.

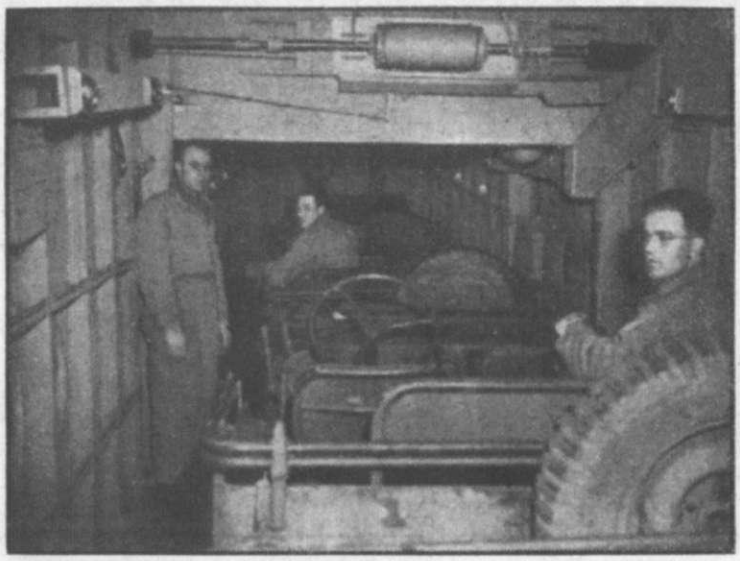
Airmail alone to the Army Post Office in North Africa totalled 36,000 lb. last Christmas—enough to stuff six Fortresses—besides 1,500,000 airgraphs to the U.K. and over 3,000,000 from home. It may look easy when you see the transport pilot make a perfect landing dead on time after a 2,000-miles run, yet the task obviously has its dangers. "Wild-Cat" Wade, the Spitfire ace with a record of 25 enemy aircraft downed by his guns, was killed in a communications aircraft miles behind the line in Italy; and the transport planes often deliberately face higher hazards.

It is not generally known—although the fact has been disclosed by the U.S. Office of War Information—that compact aluminium printing presses and other goods, and messages of encouragement, have been dropped by parachute over enemy-occupied territory and even over Germany itself. Nor did a B.24 Liberator—in the hands of Captain Richard Allen and carrying a maximum load—make any fuss about clipping 21 minutes off the fastest Atlantic record.

THE transport flyer may face an airfield that has acquired an overnight covering of ten feet of snow, and his aircraft may have to be serviced at thirty degrees below zero. He may merely be shifting mails or he may help in the movement of squadrons and of troops. It is nothing, as Squadron-Leader Ernest Murray told me, to have to land in the dark with only car headlights providing an uncertain flare path.

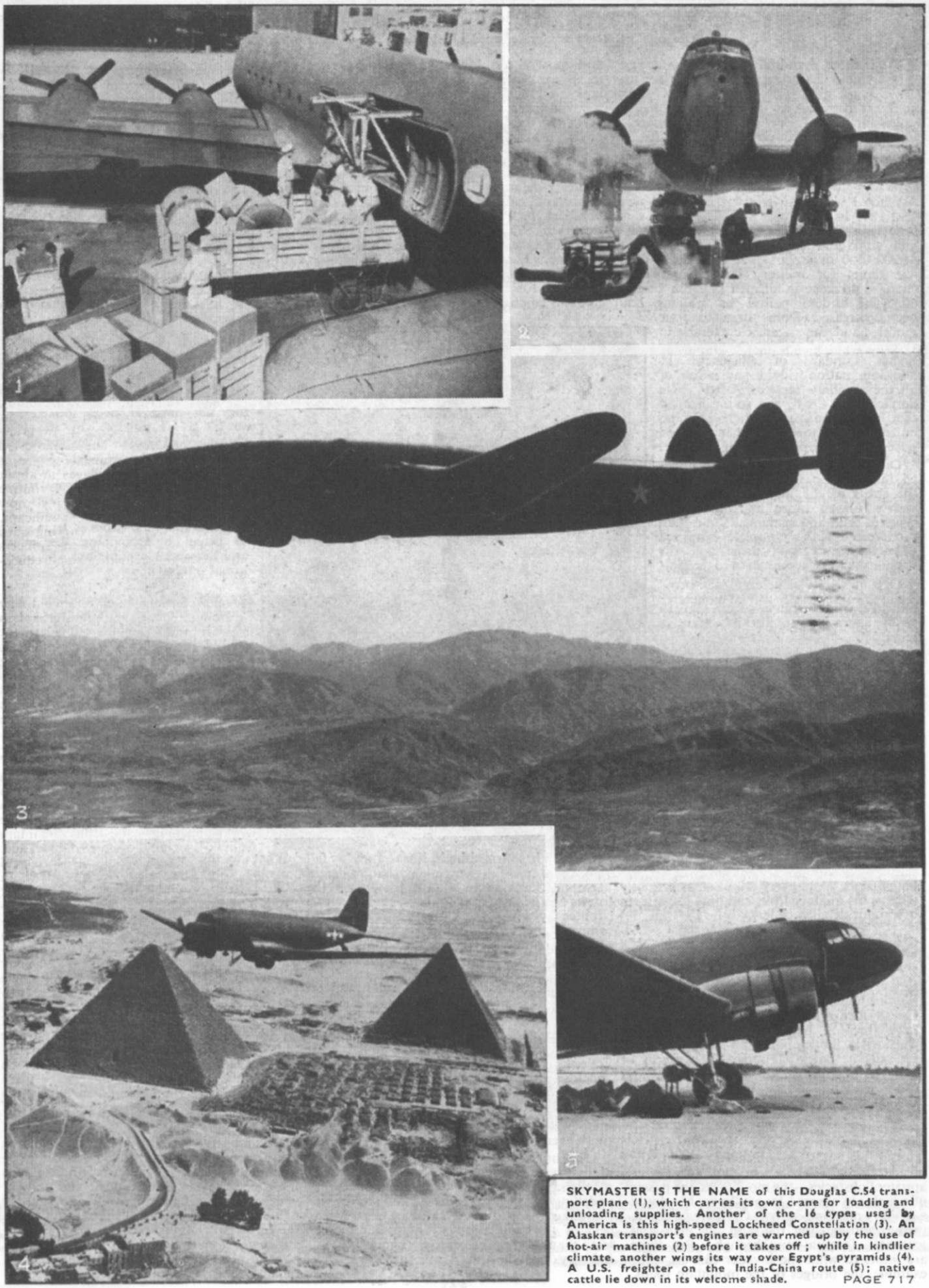
Transport reliability may turn threatened defeat into victory. There is the example of the Indo-China wing of the U.S. Transport Command: more supplies have been ferried to China over the 17,000-foot hump of the Himalayas than were ever hauled along the Burma Road at the peak of its traffic. As a result, air attacks on the Japanese in China have been doubled and redoubled. In a practically non-stop stream of planes the pilots in December 1943 carried ten times more tonnage of vital supplies than in December 1942.

The Indo-China wing even has its own efficient rescue squadron. It seldom happens, but when plane crews are forced to jump or crash in wild country rescue planes are always ready. This minor detail alone is significant of the transport transformation. Coming over the horizon are such giants as our 32-ton Tudor and the 70-ton flying boats, larger than any aircraft yet made in this country, being built by the British firm of Saunders-Roe. The war is pulling into shape the new world of air transport. And our sky-freighters are making peace dawn all the sooner.



JEEPS PACK INTO IT TWO BY TWO, so they call R.A.F. Transport Command's four-engined Avro York the "Noah's Ark." It can carry 10 tons of war freight, has a 3,000-mile range and a speed of over 300 miles per hour. Alternative load is 50 passengers. See also illus. p. 412.

These Flying Pantechnicons Deliver War Goods



SKYMASTER IS THE NAME of this Douglas C.54 transport plane (1), which carries its own crane for loading and unloading supplies. Another of the 16 types used by America is this high-speed Lockheed Constellation (3). An Alaskan transport's engines are warmed up by the use of hot-air machines (2) before it takes off; while in kindlier climate, another wings its way over Egypt's pyramids (4). A U.S. freighter on the India-China route (5); native cattle lie down in its welcome shade.

Workshop for Germany: Switzerland's Dilemma

As the waves of war advance, the neutral Swiss look over their ramparts. Compelled by force of circumstances to realize that their country is far more valuable to the Nazis as a workshop than it would be as a battlefield, what prospect do they now see? JOHN ENGLAND explains what the present holds for this peace-loving people and suggests what the future may bring.

For three hundred years no foreign soldier has stepped on Swiss soil to wage war. For three hundred years no Swiss army has left its mountain home to wage war abroad. Yet despite this apparent immunity, the Swiss government decided in 1936 that the condition of Europe warranted a vast scheme of rearmament and general preparation for defensive war.

When I visited Switzerland in 1939 I was told that in the three preceding years this little republic of a mere four million people had sunk the enormous capital sum of £46,000,000 in arms. Not only that. The age limits for military service had been changed to rope in all men between 18 and 60. The annual period of training had been increased from three to four months, and the systematic exercise in marksmanship had been brought to a higher standard of efficiency. In addition, nation-wide organization of all the auxiliary services, A.R.P., Fire Service, Red Cross, and so on, had by that date been perfected, so that no citizen was without his or her assigned post against the possibility of invasion.

On the side of material, the modernization of this peace-loving State under the stress of the increasing threat of war was even more impressive. All types of arms and armaments had been modernized with a complete disregard of cost, from small arms and the ordinary soldier's equipment to the guns which today, invisible and rock-protected, give the vast wall of concrete and steel which stretches from Geneva to the Jura Mountains its offensive sting.

This defence system of concrete walls, pillboxes, machine-gun posts, and blockhouses, is Switzerland's first line of defence. Her second line is the ramparts of the Alps. And between these two every bridge and every highway is mined. In the Zurich district I saw something of this fine protective system and learned something, too, of how Switzerland stands prepared for the coming of any aggressor. I was told, for example, that complete mobilization could be carried out throughout the Confederation in forty-eight hours. I was told that within one hour every post of the outer defence system could be manned. And every man knows precisely what is his military task, and how to perform it without detailed orders.

Switzerland is the only country that has kept her citizens armed and equipped for war through periods of peace. Then, as today, every Swiss of military age had in his own home rifle, ammunition, and uniform. Cavalrymen are given their own horses and have them at hand in their own stables. The order for mobilization finds the army virtually at battle stations. The alarm of invasion might, within sixty seconds, find every road and bridge blown sky-high. A single button controls the whole system.

Such, in brief, are the measures Switzerland has taken to preserve her neutrality. It is fair to ask: What obstacles would the invader meet? There are, first of all, the apparent obstacles—the mountains, the passes of which are covered by artillery. No doubt a military machine, such as Germany's, could, caring nothing for the cost in men and materials, force a way through. But there are limits to what the invader can do. For example, the bridges of the mountain roads, and most of the highways themselves, are incapable of supporting the weight of heavy tanks, a circumstance which would restrict, too, the transport of artillery units—in the event of the system of defence by mines having broken down.

On the air side, the Confederation has prepared itself thoroughly. Anti-aircraft defence naturally plays a more important role than fighting aircraft and bombers. It is, indeed, the central characteristic of the Swiss rearmament that it could never be taken for anything but a defensive machine. It could not be used for offence, for it lacks all those adjuncts which an army designed for movement in remote terrains finds to be absolutely essential.

SWISS APPEAL FOR AID for war-stricken children of the Occupied Countries, at a Red Cross exhibition in Lausanne, met with the sympathy of the citizens and resulted in substantial contributions. Work of the Red Cross among interned British and Empire troops in neutral Switzerland is mentioned in this page. *Photo, New York Times Photos*

What has transpired since Italy's fall to bring this four-year-old system of defensive measures in a neutral State into the news? The answer is simple. There are two routes by which the Germans were able to move men and war materials between Germany and Italy. The first was the Brenner. But the Brenner is a single-track line, and is not adapted to heavy war traffic of this kind. The other route is via the Simplon and St. Gotthard systems, with their tunnels (which have now been mined at both ends).

Switzerland is in a very difficult position. She is today virtually enclosed in the heart of continental Europe; and the envelope that encloses her is the military might of Nazi Germany. All her foreign trade is cut off, and at her frontiers Gestapo agents in civilian dress watch her customs officers and sometimes even interfere with them.

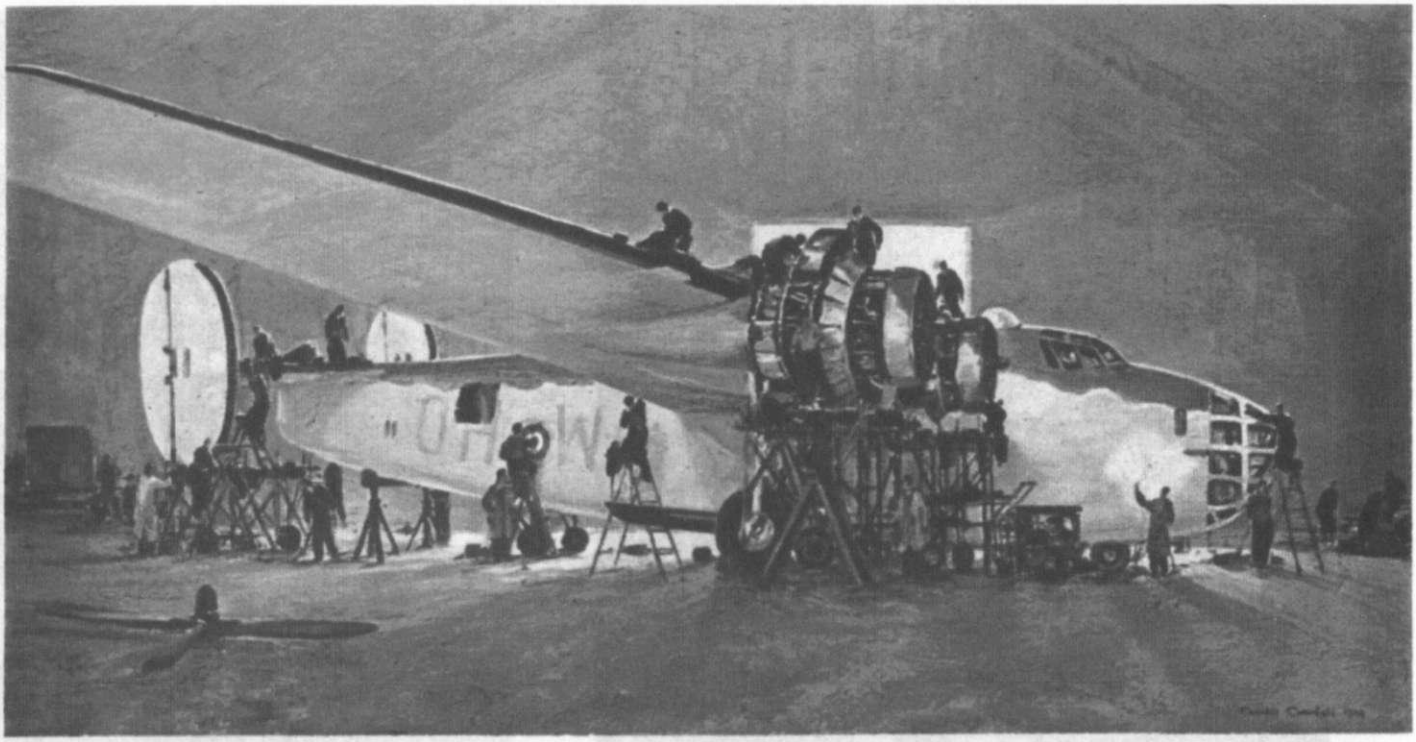
Like ourselves, Switzerland imports food and all her raw materials. It is quite wrong to envisage this lovely land as one wherein yodelling herdsmen roam the mountains in the wake of bell-tinkling cattle. Only 21 per cent of the population is on the land; no less than 44·6 per cent is employed in industry. At the time I was in Switzerland I was told that the contingency that has now befallen had been provided against by the accumulation of vast stores of raw materials of all kinds, and of all essential foods.

It is these materials which have kept the wheels of Switzerland's industry turning—for Nazi Germany. Here she had no choice, since there was for her, ringed about as she has been, no alternative customer. From Zurich and the other great industrial centres, Switzerland has been pouring into Germany the precision instruments which are the natural transition of the watchmaker's craft to war work. As for food, it is upon the stocks of accumulated staple foods that the country has been feeding. Even so, there is no meat in Lausanne, or in Geneva, and precious little anywhere else.

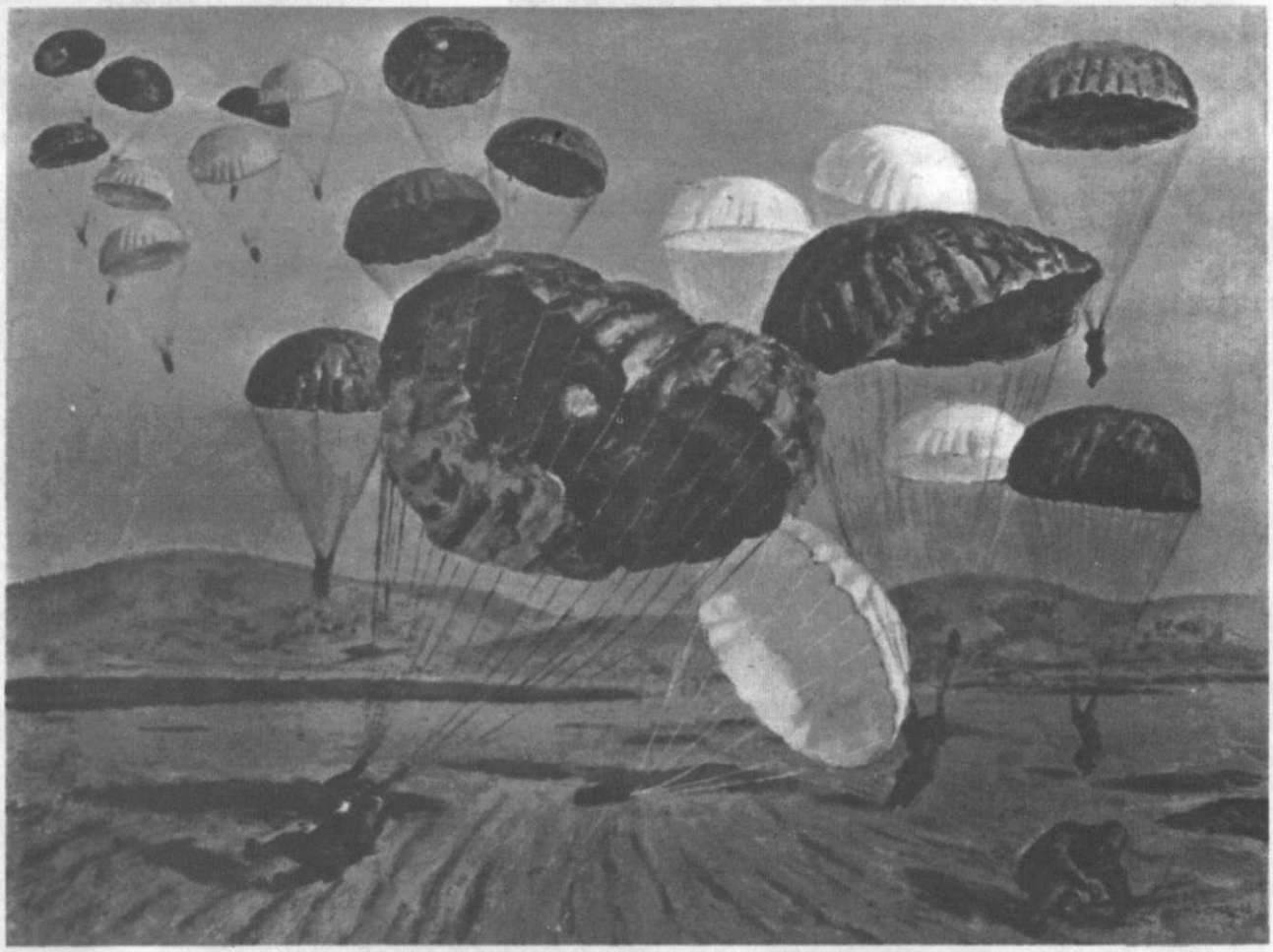
Naturally that food shortage affects also the thousands of British and Empire soldiers who escaped from captivity after Italy capitulated and are now interned in Switzerland; they are, however, being looked after, so far as is possible, by the International Red Cross. They are allowed by the Swiss Government to be at liberty in towns and villages in about 20 centres, where their daily routine is a fairly rigorous one. Just now boredom is one of their chief handicaps, but this the Red Cross is trying hard to dispel by providing the officers and men with occupations and educational interests.

If one considers Switzerland today from the Nazi standpoint it is plain she is far more valuable to the Germans as a workshop than as a battlefield. Faced by the terrible dilemma of risking war by closing her transport systems to all transit traffic, Switzerland has taken no action in the face of the plain Nazi threat and the overt hostile act of closing the Swiss-Italian frontier. The collapse of Italy and the occupation of the northern part of the "leg" by the Nazis and their puppet Italian government, has created a situation crucial for Switzerland, for German customs officers control all outside world openings and thus maintain what is, virtually, a state of blockade. What do the Swiss think of the Nazis and of the Democratic Nations in arms? In the 1914-18 war the line-up was one that followed the logic of language: German-speaking Swiss were pro-German, the French-speaking were pro-Ally. When I was in Zurich and Berne I found everywhere a complete detestation of all that Hitler's Germany stands for. I never met, or heard of, a single Swiss Nazi sympathizer. But since then Dr. Goebbels has been very active. His high-powered propaganda has been worked with skill and thoroughness. So far, in face of it, we have done nothing by way of counter-propaganda. The fact, therefore, has to be faced—the inevitable has happened: there has been some lapse here and there towards the Nazi view, evidenced from the pages of the Gazette de Lausanne, and La Suisse.

By and large, I think it may be taken as fairly certain that Switzerland has an overwhelming majority in favour of those things for which the United Nations stand and for which they are fighting. But, as Professor von Salis put it: "Part of the ransom which the Swiss people must pay for their policy of *stillesitzen* (neutrality) is to endure without hope of recompense or benefit great military, financial and personal sacrifices."



SERVICING A LIBERATOR — Charles Cundall, A.R.A.

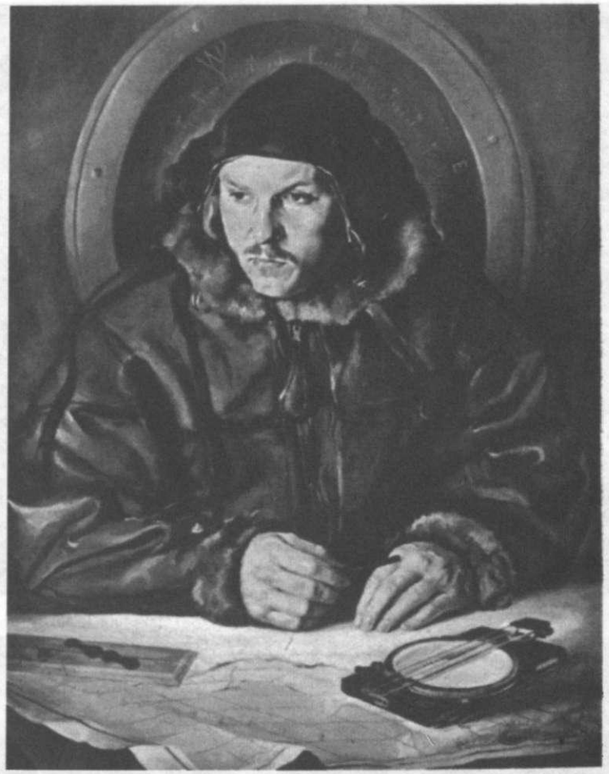


PARACHUTE DROP — Henry Carr

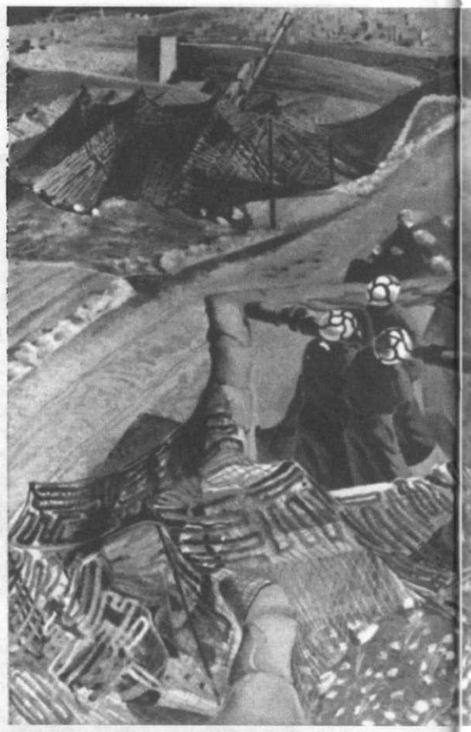
War Depicted by the Artist's Brush

CELEBRATING its fifth year of activity, Britain's War Artists' Advisory Committee has placed on view at The National Gallery, London, new oil paintings, water colours and drawings covering every aspect of the war in Europe, from N. Africa, Malta, Sicily and Italy to as far north as Iceland, and ranging from the picturesquely vigorous to the grimly dramatic. In this and the following pages is a selection of striking examples of the work of artists who have contributed to this display. There are eight official artists, appointed by the Committee, now attached to the Armed Forces.

Exhibited at The National Gallery, London, Spring 1944. *Crown copyright reserved.*



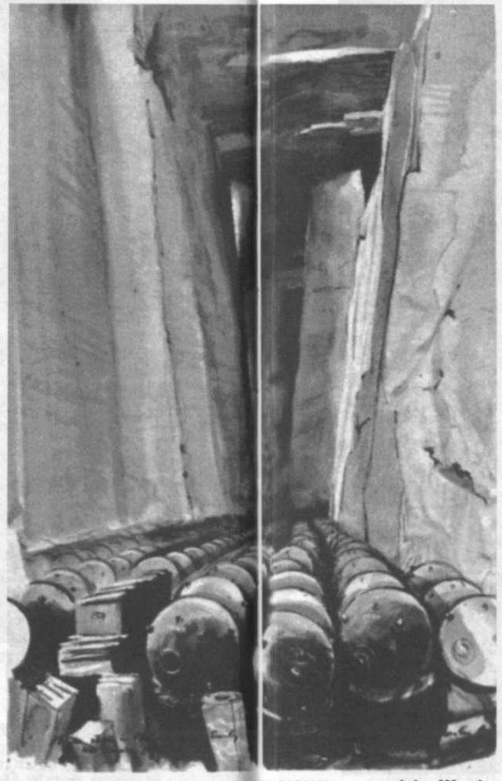
A PATHFINDER — J. Berry



HEAVY A.A. AND VALETTA IN DISTANCE DURING RAID — Leslie Cole

BRIGADIER DE LA BERE (MALTA) — Leslie Cole

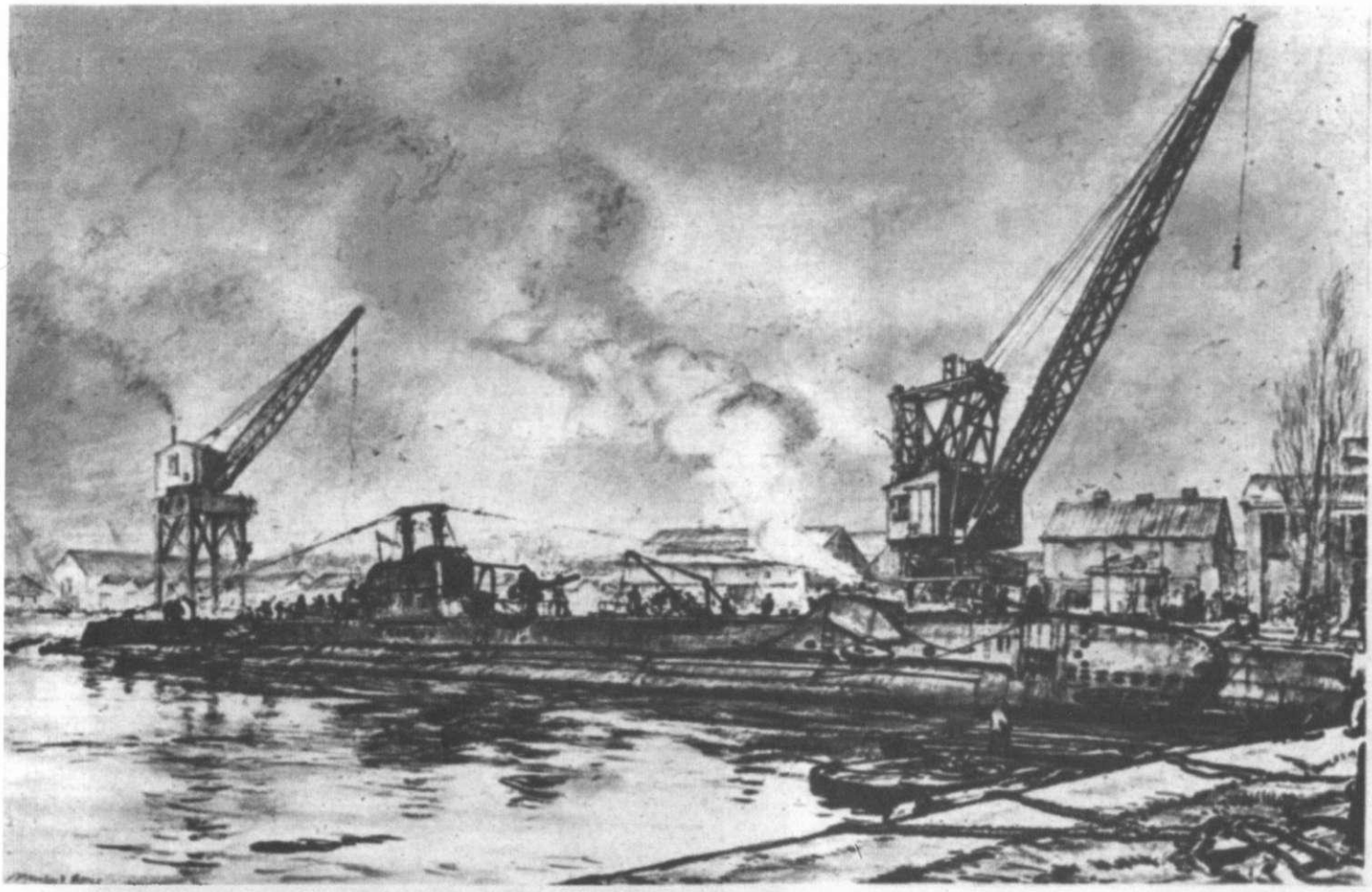
R.A.F. AIR SEA RESCUE LAUNCHES ; THE FISH QUAY BEYOND — Stephen Bone



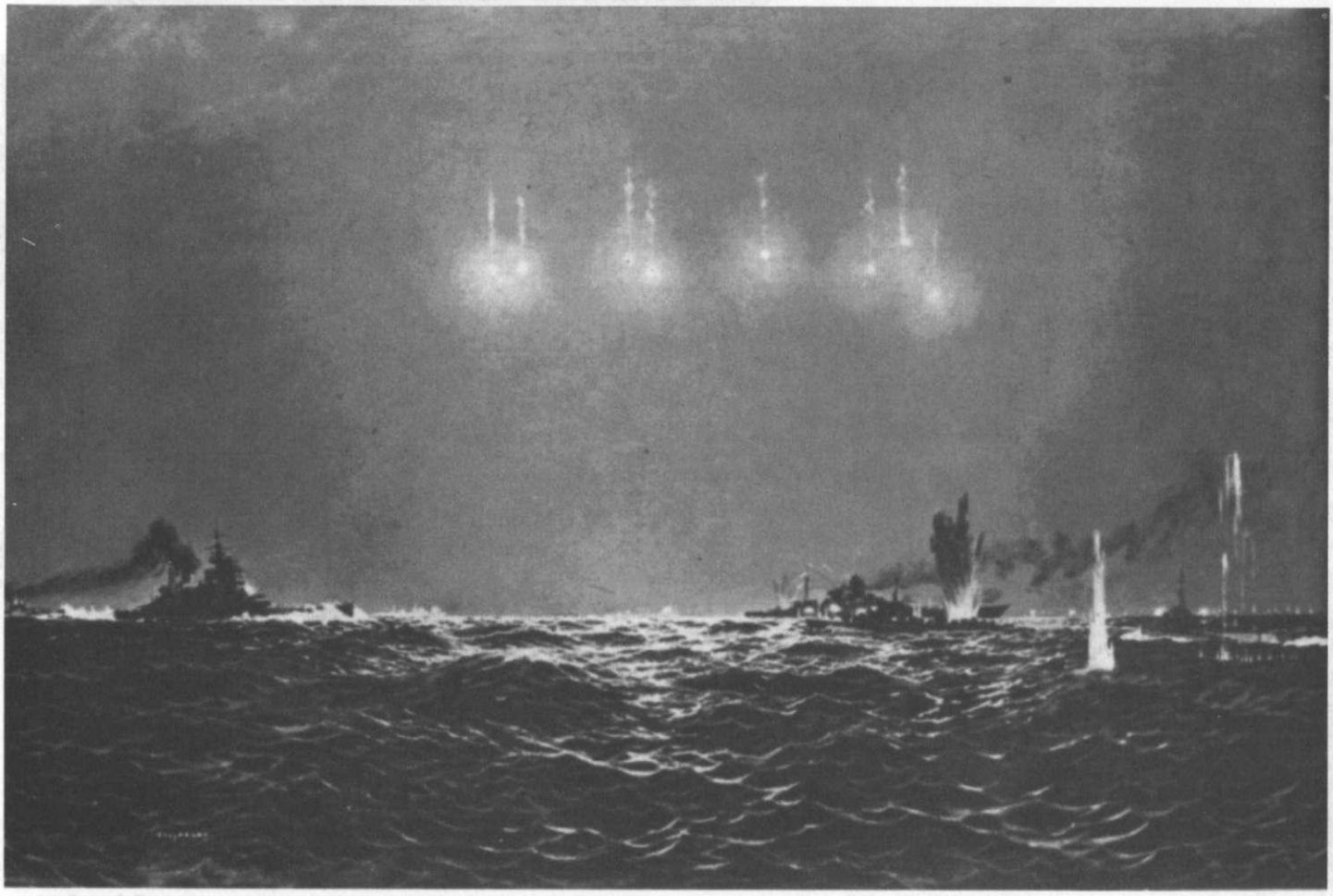
MINES STORED IN MELILLI CAVE SICILY — John Worsley

WOOLWICH ARSENAL, 1943 — Robert Austin

Exhibited at The National Gallery, London, spring 1944. Crown copyright reserved.



REFITTING H.M. SUBMARINE SHAKESPEARE — Sir Muirhead Bone



THE SINKING OF THE SCHARNHORST — Charles Pears

Exhibited at The National Gallery, London, Spring 1944. Crown copyright reserved.

VIEWS & REVIEWS

Of Vital War Books

by Hamilton Fyfe

WHY is the Eighth Army famous beyond any other army in the war? What gave it the bold spirit, the unflagging energy, the dogged determination to go through, which its commander praised so warmly when he left it? Why, when we see a book called I Was an Eighth Army Soldier (Gollancz, 4s. 6d.), do we feel sure there will be something in it that isn't in in other war books?

Well, if you are in doubt as to the answers to those questions, you will find yourself wiser when you have read the account Driver R. J. Crawford, of the R.A.S.C., gives of his experiences in the Desert. He did not write them himself. He narrated them to a R.A.S.C. major, who used to be on the Daily Express, and knew how to put them into the right words and sentences. The result couldn't be improved on. No collaboration was ever more successful. The pages from beginning to end tingle with life. They bring the sand and the brassy sun and the hot blue sky and the pests and the perils so vividly before us that even the most stay-at-home readers will feel they have been there. The nature of the fighting is not described so much as shown in the clear little pictures that emerge from the narrator's memory.

BUT first let us see why the Eighth Army was different (is still, perhaps—I don't know). Was it General Montgomery's doing? In large part, yes. His name became known as the names of Bonaparte and Garibaldi were known to their troops; it had the sound of a bugle-call; it made every man feel as if he were under the eye of the commander himself. He is, as I have said before on this page, an unusual man to be a general in any army—and most unusual to be one of the supreme leaders of our British forces. Plumer was popular, Allenby was popular, but to nothing like the same extent. Montgomery is admired and loved and trusted ("loved" is not too strong a word) because he is utterly unlike the ordinary British general, because he has a personality which compels respect as well as affection, because he seems to the troops to be always among them—in spirit, if not in body; always inspiring, encouraging them, not as a far-off brass hat, but as one of themselves.

You may call that "legend." But no legend ever grew up without some foundation on fact; as a rule legends have a pretty solid foundation. The idea the soldiers have of Montgomery is the right one. It couldn't be otherwise. An army does not make a hero of its commander without good reason. But that is not the whole story. We must go behind the popularity of the General and ask what it is founded on. Quite certainly, I think, it is founded on his being different, and on the difference being specially attractive to the troops. "Only a 'human general' could succeed in the Desert." Australians and South Africans took to him from the start. Indians, who are commended as the best night fighters ever, saw in him a man after their own hearts.

We British arrived in the Desert rather timorous and a little worried. We were very much "Hollywood" in our ideas. We pictured harems, swaying-robed Arabs on sleek Arabian horses, long lines of British soldiers tramping endlessly through the waterless sand, dropping by the wayside as thirst weakened and finally halted their faltering steps! It was all very Beau Geste and Foreign Legion!

But all that quickly wore off. They got to know the Desert. They "settled down to it with a sense of humour. They made the best of every bad situation." They were not, like the Italians, frightened of it. They did not even dislike it, as the Germans did,

Revelations of an 8th Army Soldier

never feeling sure of themselves, never comfortable. They grinned and bore it. They made a joke of its discomforts. They said it wasn't such a bad old Desert after all. At Tobruk, when Crawford was drafted in there, after it had been battered by the enemy for more than half a year, they found nothing but "a shambles of stone and ironwork. Our job was to make a home for ourselves." They did it too. They found old bedsteads. A derelict rubber horse once used by sea-bathers was converted into a "li-lo." A camel skin served for a bed-spread. On an ancient kitchen range they cooked. From a dump of German car batteries they rigged up their electric light.

FOOD abounded in certain "caches" stocked by the garrison as reserves. "We dug up cases of beer, Italian cheeses, tins of fruit, bottles of whisky, and hundreds of other luxury items." They built a dance hall. They gave dinner parties. "Invitations would be carried out with style and dignity, the host visiting his guests in their dug-outs and ceremoniously requesting their presence at, say, 7.30 p.m. It was this kind of play-acting and humour that saved us from going mad." What drove them nearly crazy were the pests of the Desert rather than the attentions of the Hun.

At least the human enemy did have to rest occasionally. The flea was the torturer supreme and never rested. No matter what we did, it was always with us.

SOME relief was obtained by keeping tame mice. The fleas seemed to prefer them. The mice "became great companions and, apart from their flea-collecting propensities, we trained them into doing all kinds of tricks." Lizards they liked because they made war on flies, "easily the most dangerous of all our enemies."

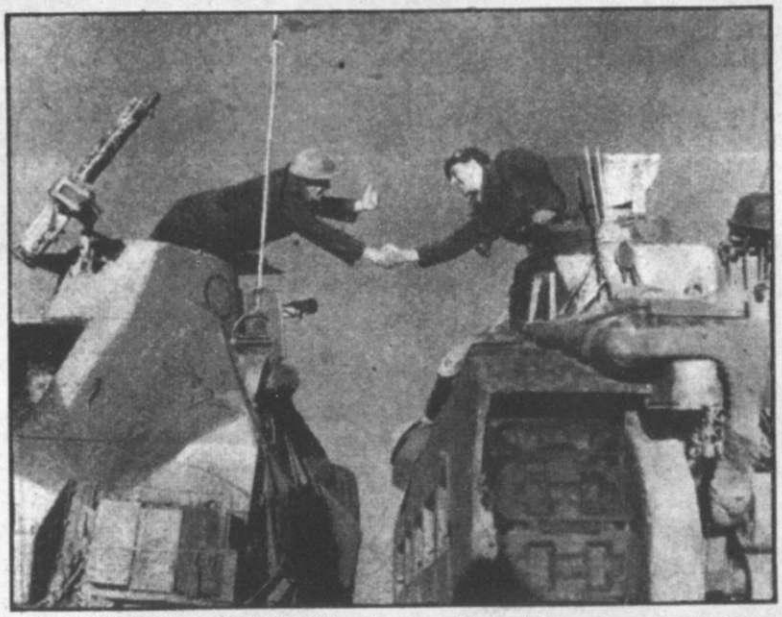
Beetles were amusing. Scorpions and centipedes were not. They produced more casualties than the Germans. Most of us ate meals with a handkerchief or piece of paper in one hand and our food in the other. While we tried to get the food to our mouths free from flies, we waved the other hand about wildly; even so we ate many hundreds of flies. They settled on food like a cloud and no amount of waving disturbed them. They could clean jam and butter from a slice of bread much quicker than we could eat it . . . Several men actually lost their reason because of flies. Their unending presence was nerve-racking to the strongest of us.

Kites had a maddening trick of swooping down and snatching up food, but you had to laugh at them sometimes. At first mysterious disappearances of dinners caused puzzlement and alarm. Theft was suspected, practical joking, ill-will. Then the birds, "vultures of the Desert," were caught dropping swiftly and picking up food which they ate, as they flew away, in the air.

One day I saw one of our drivers smack another under the jaw for stealing his dinner, as he thought. Some of us had seen the kites pick up the dinner and the affair was amicably settled after our explanations.

As for sandstorms, well, no one who has been in one will think Crawford exaggerates when he says "words can hardly describe the experience." It is bad enough when you can keep inside a house or when you are on a train (on the line from Atbara to Khartoum I was once in a very thick one): when you have to keep on driving a lorry through it, the misery is trebled. Pace was reduced to a crawl. Visibility was often only two or three yards. Not only were eyes filled with sand, but it got through clothes and, as the heat caused violent perspiration, it entered the pores of the skin. If it was not scrubbed out soon, it brought on boils or eczema. As for making tea for the mid-day meal in a sandstorm, it generally ended as half tea and half sand. "Every mess-tin had at least a quarter of an inch in the bottom of it when the remnants were poured away."

Yet, even when they had to retreat before Rommel's advance, there was no feeling that they were beaten, that they had better chuck it. "Never once did I hear a man want to give in." Sometimes they were stunned and lifeless after heavy defeat, but "there was never a whimper, no one bemoaned his fate." Those are not mere heartening phrases. Crawford is always genuine. That is the value of the book. Revealing how the 8th Army was moulded (as the Foreword says) into the finest fighting machine in the world, through the eyes of this one soldier is mirrowed the soul of that great army.



8th ARMY TANK COMMANDERS exchange good luck wishes as they set out from besieged Tobruk in November 1941 to make contact with Imperial troops at Sidi Rezegh, where quantity of British tanks brought victory. When quality was added to quantity, as at El Alamein and Mareth, the German panzers were finally defeated. An 8th Army soldier makes absorbingly interesting disclosures in the book reviewed in this page. *Photo, British Official*

Manstein is Sacked from South Russian Front

LOSS OF TEN DIVISIONS in the Korsun "pocket" and several more north-west of Nikolayev, led to Field Marshal von Manstein being replaced as Supreme Commander of the German armies on the southern Russian front by Field Marshal von Kleist. Manstein, whose name is linked with retreats—he was beaten at Stalingrad and on the Don—inspects his troops (1) before handing over.

German tanks hastily abandoned will doubtless be employed by the Russians against their former owners, for these tanks (3) are in thoroughly sound condition. Ten-barrelled rocket guns (2) are being used by the Nazi army. Swift-moving motor-sleighs (4) carry Russian shock-troops over frozen marsh-land to attack enemy positions at Pskov, on the northern front. See map in p. 677.

Photos, Planet News, Associated Press, Pictorial Press

This Monster Will Roar No More for Germany

ONE OF THE WEHRMACHT'S HEAVIES was this huge siege mortar captured by the Russians; it is believed to be either a 240-mm. or 305-mm. piece. In Moscow it was examined by members of the Soviet Supreme Command; left to right are Adm. Kuznetzov, People's Commissar for the Navy; Marshal Voronov, in charge of Red Army artillery; Marshal Zhukov, Deputy Supreme Commander; and Marshal Voroshilov. Comparable British weapon is the 9·2-in. gun which fires a 330-lb. shell a distance of 20,000 yds. *Photo, Keystone*

This Soviet Plane Turned Nazi Jeers to Fears

One of the earliest aircraft ever produced by the Soviet, the plywood-and-fabric Yu.2 was almost a museum piece. Normally this two-seater would be obsolete by now; but the impossible has happened, and Russian airmen are today maddening the Nazis with it. Achievements of this astonishing old-timer are here narrated by the Soviet writer KONSTANTIN SIMONOV:

THE Germans called the Yu.2 "Russ-plywood." These aircraft are made of wood and linen. Their speed is only 60-70 miles an hour, and they make a noise like a motor-cycle on a bad road. What a queer notion to send people in such rickety affairs to drop bombs by hand out of the cockpit on to the German positions!

But Russians are obstinate people, and if they once get a good idea into their heads they will carry it out, sooner or later, on a grand Russian scale. Before long, bomber detachments of "Russ-plywood" were pounding the Germans with hundreds of tons of bombs. The Germans stopped making jokes about our Yu.2s.

At Stalingrad, as soon as it was dark and the first white glow-worms of signal rockets marked the forward positions, the sky began to growl softly over the German positions. German searchlights groped, German A.A. guns fired at random, and vari-coloured threads of machine-gun bursts converged from all sides on the queer sound. The gurgling and rumbling went on. The Yu.2s were abroad.

Here and there they would suspend flares like lamps over the ground itself, drop small bombs into gullies crowded with German troops, on roads along which columns were marching, into houses where the Germans had their Headquarters.

After a lot of hard work, the German A.A. gunners did finally get the measure of the "Russ-plywood." So our pilots adopted new methods. They climbed to the limit, took aim at their targets, glided over soundlessly and dropped their cargoes in dead silence. About this time fantastic hints concerning some strange new Russian aircraft with noiseless engines, or with none at all, appeared in German soldiers' letters from the front . . .

ON autumn nights the steppe is pervaded with the scent of wormwood, and a chilly ground-wind blows from the Dnieper. The cloudy, starless sky is black, remote, impenetrable. But away to the left a broad crimson glow stretches for many miles where Stalingrad burns. We are crossing a flying-field, and somewhere close at hand invisible aircraft hum in the air. Fifteen or twenty kilometres away a searchlight swings its blade in our direction, and goes out.

"Our men are coming back. They're preparing to land. The searchlight's showing them the right direction," my companion explains. After half an hour's tramp we reach the command-post. From above this is only a huge haystack, just like thousands dotting the steppe. We stoop and squeeze through a little door curtained with two tent-cloaks. Within, we find quite a big room. Two tables are placed to form the letter "T." The commander and detachment commissar are seated close to a lantern on the table.

WE have arrived at a busy moment; crews come in to report and then go out to take off. The freshness of the night air and the fragrance of hay fill the room.

Tonight the crews are going to bomb a settlement around an airfield not far from Stalingrad. The Germans broke into it and stationed large units there, so for the past few days it has been subjected to a severe pounding. Many of the Yu.2 pilots used to live in that settlement. That was where they learned to fly. So today's tasks are particularly exact and reports very detailed.

"What were you pounding just now?" Captain Ovodov asks a tall airman just back from a sortie.

"Number Three."

"That was the house you used to live in, wasn't it?"

"No, I was in Number Four. There are fires here and here, and right in this spot."

"Just here?" the commander asks, growing thoughtful. "Yes. In short, my cottage is either occupied or burned down. Well, that's that."

Every night means seven or eight hours in the air, every night means fifteen sorties, every night these little "Russ-plywood" aircraft drop tons of bombs on the enemy. Sometimes they beat the heavy bombers at their own game.

"We rarely have a day off," Captain Ovodov says, "particularly in summer. Unless, of course, there's a terrific fog. Then we're free."

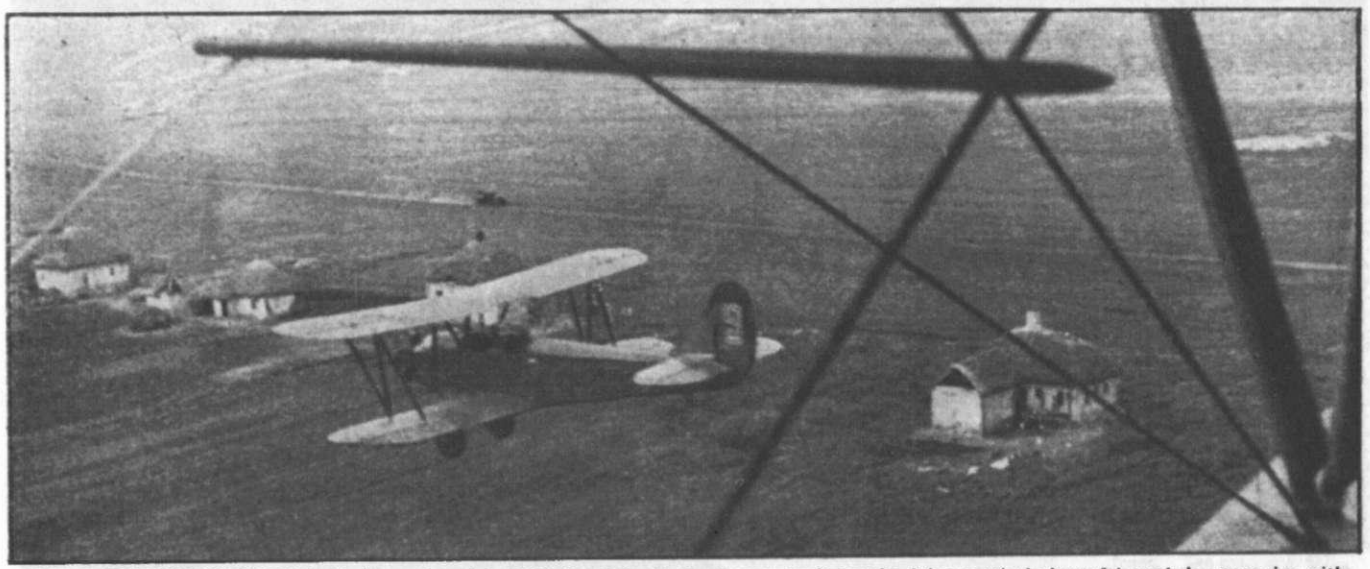
Just as the tommy-gun cannot really replace the rifle in an experienced sniper's hands, the old leisurely Yu.2 proved irreplaceable. Its deficiencies, such as its slow speed, became advantages. At Stalingrad, where the front line passed from house to house, from village to village, in zigzags, wedges and tongues, not one contemporary night-bomber could have tackled the jobs the Yu.2 could do. It could bomb the German half of a block while the other half-block was still in Soviet hands. Its low speed and ideal bombing-aim enabled it to hang over the target and strike unerringly. It bombed places where the German pilots would not risk operating for fear of dropping their loads on their own troops.

The Yu.2 pilots loved their planes for their serviceability, the simple way you could take off and land in them, and for the fact that though they looked so flimsy they were really one of the grimmest of weapons. They could stand six night flights in any weather, go wherever they were sent. The pilots knew that the infantry down below were fonder of these planes than of any other. They called them affectionately the "foresters," or the "cornflies," according to the landscape.

ALL the pilots were experienced night-flyers, who rarely suffered losses. During six months only two failed to return from their mission. They took off and landed in pitch darkness. Never once had the Germans been able to bomb their aerodrome: all the lighting allowed was a couple of lanterns. Yu.2 pilots boasted that they themselves could land by the light of a cigarette.

This is a great day for the detachment: pilots and navigators are to receive rewards for their work. The best receive the Order of Lenin. Now, just before daybreak, they are making their second sortie.

An hour later they return, rubbing their eyes, red from sleeplessness and wind, and shivering in the sharp morning air. Some day, when the history of this war is written, the names of these obscure heroes will be remembered; they are the hardworking, manly, modest young fellows who were responsible for altering the significance of the nickname "Russ-plywood" from the absurd to the grim.



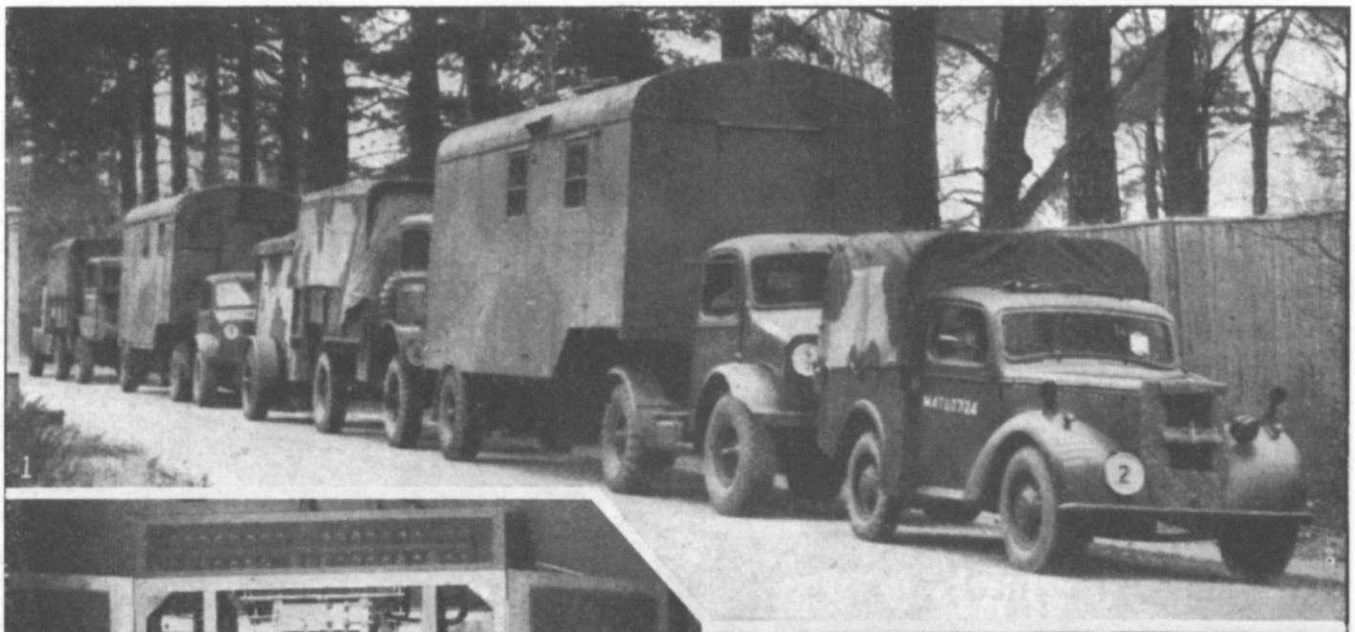
AERIAL RECONNAISSANCE is the immediate job of this low-flying Yu.2. Tomorrow it may be doing particularly useful work in connexion with communications and supplies for guerilla forces in the rear of the German lines; the next day it may be dropping bombs. Several Guards bomber regiments of the Russian Air Force are equipped with this old and slow-flying, but amazingly efficient, plane which has gained the wholesome respect of enemy A.A. gunners after having been regarded by them as a harmless joke. See also facing page.

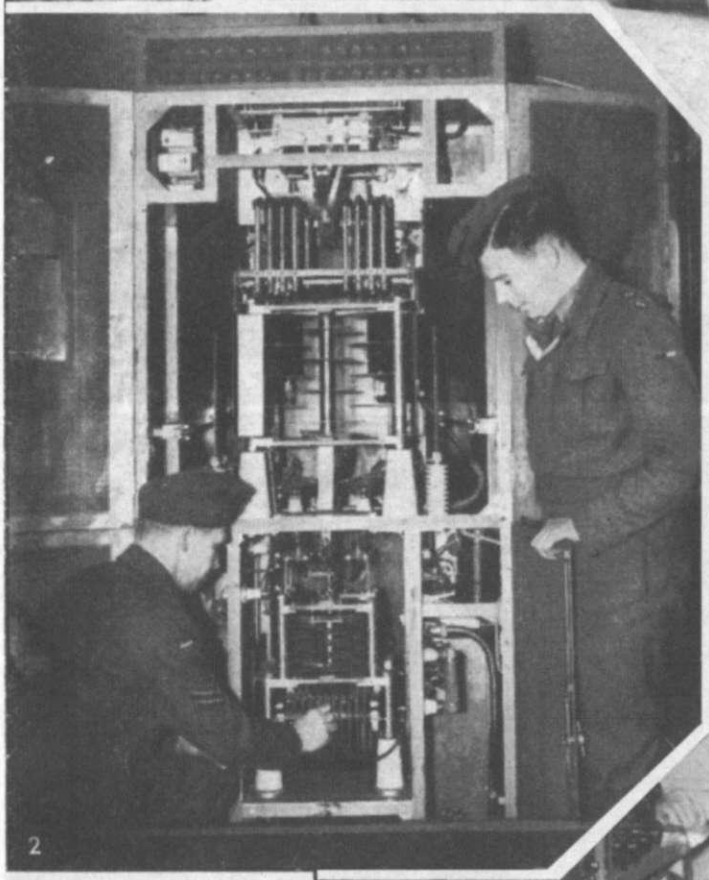
Photo, Pictorial Press

Old-Timer of the Red Air Force Fights On

YU.2 BIPLANE BOMBERS of Russia's sky armoury stand motionless (top), but ready for action in the dusk on a snow-covered Soviet airfield, their undercarriages replaced by skis to enable them more easily to negotiate treacherously slippery ground. Below, they drop their flares on German front line positions to light the way; in spite of the fact that they first took the air 15 years ago they are still remarkable for accurate night precision bombing. See descriptive account in facing page. *Photos: Pictorial Press*

'Golden Arrow' Will Flash Home Victory News





FROM BATTLEFIELD to Britain, when our western offensive begins, will come news of the Forces' progress flashed direct to London by mobile wireless transmitting and receiving units named "Golden Arrow," after the famous peacetime boat train.

A unit consists of seven vehicles, including two Diesel power-generators (one a spare) mounted as trailers towed by the lorries, and the section commander's small utility truck; each section has an officer and 22 operators, instrument mechanics, electricians, and drivers of the Royal Corps of Signals, and a cook of the Army Catering Corps with petrol-burning stove.

A complete Golden Arrow unit is seen on the road (1). A corporal adjusts the tuning coils (2); a signalman replaces a transmitter valve (3). Inside the wireless station vehicle (4); a dispatch rider, in the background, is delivering messages for transmission.

Photos, Associated Press, G.P.U.

I WAS THERE! Eye Witness Stories of the War

How We Cracked the Pill-Boxes at Kwajalein

Capture of Kwajalein, in the Marshall Islands, completed on Feb. 5, 1944, involved plenty of Japanese pill-box cracking, a grim operation with a technique of its own and described here by Howard Handleman, Daily Express correspondent in that area of the Pacific. See also illus. p. 660.

WHILE leaning on the side of a concrete pill-box in which Private First Class John Garrison had just bayoneted a lone Jap, I had a close-up view of the technique of pill-box busting. The Americans were cleaning-up on this Jap-held island in the Pacific. The Jap pill-boxes were close together. Old-fashioned they were, with gun-slots facing the Pacific Ocean, and foot-thick reinforced steel doors, which do not crack at all easily.

Pill-box cracking is a job for all kinds of specialists—riflemen, grenade-throwers, flame-throwers, tanks and engineers with "satchel charges" filled with T.N.T. Our men moved slowly from pill-box to pill-box, sweating in the sun as they lugged heavy equipment. A sergeant with camouflage and war-paint sweating off his face, reported: "Two pill-boxes cleared, three full of Japs. That's what is holding us up." He sent a runner back for the tanks, and it was comforting to see them.

Tank No. 13, with a pretty girl and the words "Miss Friday" painted on the side, rumbled through the jungle with a 37-mm. gun moving from the turret. The tank blasted two heavy explosive shells into a pill-box at less than 15 yards, crumbling the concrete. A flame-thrower began jetting two sheets of solid flame into the box. A great cloud of black smoke poured out.

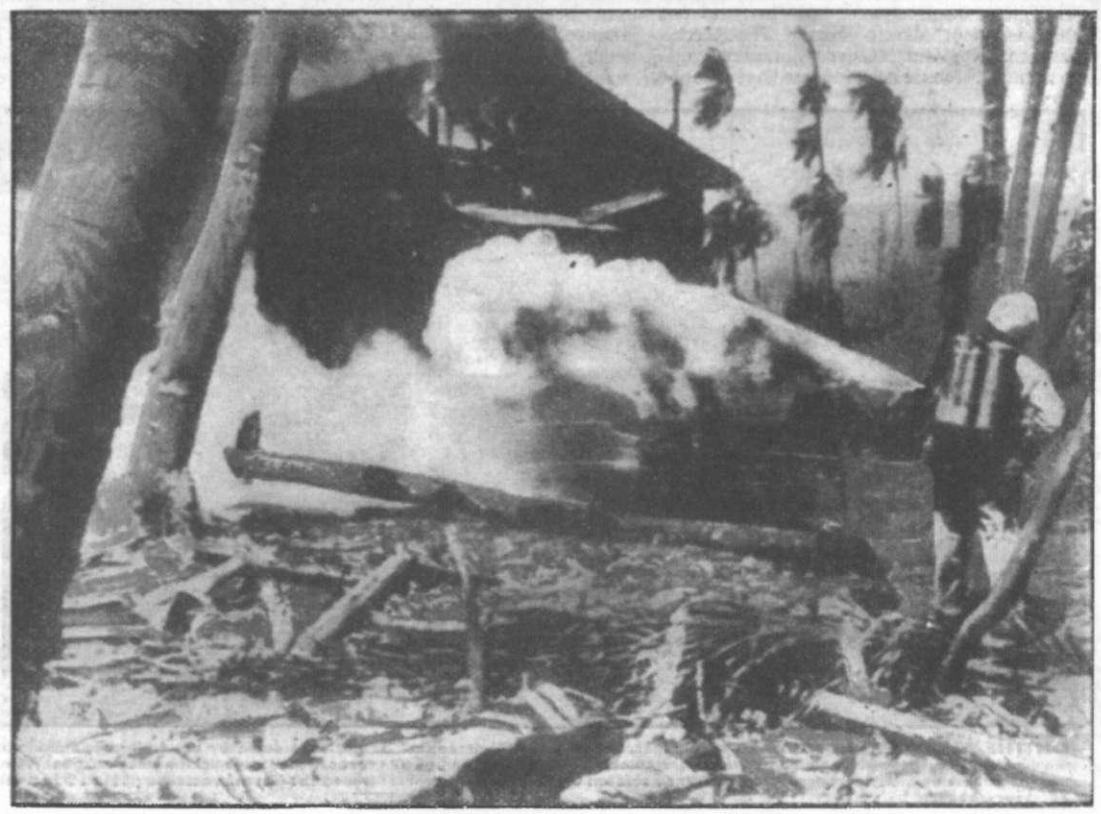
A squad moved to the next box, hopping forward with the movement of men in fear of being shot. I ducked forward with them. The next few minutes gave a blue-print of anti-pill-box technique. Staff-Sergeant Jack Martin and another rifleman ran close to the pill-box and poured a stream of rifle bullets at it to keep the Japs under cover, while Private Edgar Johnson moved up with a flame-thrower.

The riflemen ran back as the flame-thrower moved into position all alone before the pill-box. Johnson squirted the sheet of flame directly at the door, another obliquely at the door, and a third at the concrete wall. The fuel consumed, he dropped back a few paces to refill. Asked if he got his Japs, he said, coolly enough, "I think so, sir, but I wouldn't want to say."

Then the soldiers moved forward to the next pill-box, which was the toughest of all. Tank No. 13 threw a few 37s at the box. The flame-throwers were refuelling, so they were not used. The riflemen shot lots of rounds. A machine-gun, newly arrived, covered the slot of the pill-box with steady fire. Grenades were thrown. No. 13 continued to fire its vicious 37-mm. gun.

Finally an engineer, with spectacles, trudged up with T.N.T. wrapped in gun-sacking, and bound with wire. This is the "satchel charge." Under fire and machine-gun cover, Corporal Chester Gibson crouched low, and moved as close as he possibly could to the box.

The sergeant shouted: "Everybody down!" and everyone hugged the earth as Gibson threw the charge at the box, and grabbed the earth himself. The charge which blew up the pill-box stunned everyone in a wide radius as the ground shook, and ears tingled. It sounds easy. It is not.



FLAME-THROWERS were used by American Marines to destroy this Japanese strongpoint on Namur, one of the islands of the Kwajalein atoll. Dynamite, bayonets, bombs and shells all featured in the great clearance. How enemy concrete pill-boxes were dealt with, one by one, in the furious battle of the Marshall Islands is told above.

Photo, Planet News

I Walked Out of the War into Liechtenstein

The only country in Europe which has not a single soldier or a single gun: such is the remarkable little principality recently visited by Frederick Gleaner, Daily Express representative. He gives here the intriguing story of his interview with its ruler, Prince Franz Joseph, on March 14, 1944.

AT 11 o'clock this morning I crossed the River Rhine and walked right out of the war. By showing my passport to a Swiss guard at the frontier station of Buchs and crossing the ancient stone bridge, I stepped into the only country in Europe which has not a single soldier or a single gun—Liechtenstein, the tiny neutral principality on the borders of Nazi-land.

I was there to call on its ruler, 38-year-old Prince Franz Joseph II, who, with his fair-haired 23-year-old consort, lives in his small domain, simply and inexpensively. A smart grey-blue bus drove me past snow-covered farms into the capital, Vaduz.

At the main gate of Liechtenstein Castle four old cannon pointed their muzzles across the wide Rhine valley towards Switzerland. "You will notice the birds' nests in the muzzles of these old relics," said my guide. Inside, the castle breathed an air of solid, Victorian comfort. The walls of the main hall, with its open fireplace, were hung with priceless Van Dyck and Brueghel canvases. Packets of English and American cigarettes were on a table.

The door opened, and Prince Franz Joseph came in. He is a tall, youthful-looking man, dressed in tweed jacket and golfing trousers. His eyes are dark, he has a well-trimmed black moustache and the heavy lower lip of the Hapsburgs. He speaks German with an Austrian accent, and uses his hands frequently when talking. (He succeeded his great-uncle, Prince Franz Joseph I, in 1938.)

The Prince offered me an English cigarette as we sat down in a window seat and talked informally. He began by saying: "So far the Germans have not interfered with either my country or myself. I am able to travel wherever I wish on a German visa, and frequently visit my estates in Vienna and Czechoslovakia."

He did not agree that life was either lonely or monotonous in Liechtenstein. "We receive guests frequently," he said. "Then there is mountain climbing, chamois hunting and trips to Zurich. We enjoy English movies like In Which We Serve and Mrs. Miniver, which the Swiss cinemas are now showing."

Prince Franz said his country had no outstanding international problems, except the possibility that the tiny principality (its total area is 60 square miles, population 10,000) may one day be swamped with hordes of refugees. "We have anticipated this," he said, "by increasing our regular police force from seven to 87. We believe this force

will be sufficient to cope with the refugee problem should it arise."

But though Liechtenstein is neutral in practice, she is still technically at war with both Germany and Italy. In 1866, together with her big ally Austria, she declared war on Prussia and Italy. She furnished one officer and 58 sharpshooters to the joint war effort; but when Austria made a peace treaty with her enemies, Liechtenstein was not included. And a separate official peace treaty was never made.

None of Liechtenstein's £100,000 budget has to be spent on war needs. Very little is required for the maintenance of law and order. The police force's last big job was in autumn 1939, when a score or more of Nazi thugs staged a "march on Vaduz," with the declared intention of liberating the population from the princely yoke. Sergeant Joseph Brunhart, chief of police, quickly handled the situation by clapping four ringleaders into gaol, sending the rest home to mother.

Lt. A. A. Duff, D.S.C., R.N., captain of H.M. submarine Stubborn, was on his first voyage as her commander (although he had sailed in her before) at the time of the exciting incidents which he relates below. *Photo, British Official*

This is the Fire-Raked Cockpit of Anzio

"The whole compact and ferocious bag of tricks is contained in a cockpit less than the area bounded by Battersea, Marble Arch, Holborn, and Southwark," declared an observer who recently returned from the beach-head in Italy and gave the following impressions to a Reuter correspondent. Stories of the beach-landings on the morning of Jan. 22, 1944, and the magnificent work of the Reconnaissance Corps in that area, are in pp. 601 and 697.

TAKE a large London suburb, fill it with some of the finest Allied troops and drop it in the middle of enemy territory, and you have some idea of what is going on at Anzio. Every acre can be swept by enemy gunfire. The Fuehrer sees an immense political prize in throwing the attack back into the sea.

The Allies, with the possiblity of gaining another foot in the door of Europe, know that the eyes of the world are on this splintered wicket gate. The most murderous entertainment being dished out on the beach-head is exported to Jerry.

The German prisoners are a strange crew. They are for the most part either extraordinarily young or obviously too old. They are made up of divisions from widely scattered parts of Europe. There is a tough backbone among them, but the usual run of customers in the prisoner of war cages are anything less than Herrenvolk.

All the prisoners of war look as if they had "had it" when they were nabbed. They have the effusive relief of men who have been suddenly released from the hail of shells, bombs and mortars. Those that I saw were young, dishevelled loons—disillusioned clods whom five years ago I saw at Nuremberg.

Men who have accounted for about one in seven of the enemy regard this as the bloodiest affray since the Fuehrer "put on that coat which was most dear to him." The Reconnaissance Regiment, Guards, infantry, gunners and all the rest of them have fought through the horror and filth of this campaign with the fury and courage that in wartime comes from our cities, our shires and our hills in such abundant measure.

If Barnum and Bailey, Von Moltke, Cecil B. de Mille, Ludendorff, Genghis Khan and Charles B. Cochran got together for a war-like conference, maybe they could stage an Anzio in the heart of England. It would smash half the country to a solid pulp. It would bring ammunition dumps, wagon lines, gun parks, prisoners of war cages, petrol points and graveyards. It would bring misery and death.

But the scale of this terrific fight would be wrenched from the comparative serenity of newspaper headlines and brought out into its proper perspective.

Four Times Our Submarine Bumped the Sea-bed

H.M. submarine Stubborn has returned safely after one of the most remarkable patrols of this war. She is commanded by 24-year-old Lieut. A. A. Duff, D.S.C., R.N., and this is his story, told on his arrival back at the home port, where he and his crew were given a tremendous welcome.

WE had torpedoed two of a convoy hugging the enemy coast. This convoy, which was escorted by four trawlers, a minesweeper and another patrol vessel, was the second large one we had successfully attacked on the patrol. The first lot of depth charges didn't worry us much, but the large number which came hurtling down in the next fifteen minutes were much too close. Our after-hydroplanes—used for obtaining the desired depth—were jammed at hard-a-dive; the starboard propeller was put out of action, and a tank which is used for quick diving was inadvertently flooded. We went whistling down and were dangerously deep before I could pull up by blowing main ballast and regain trim by rushing all hands aft to bring up the bow.

One after another the hands scrambled through narrow openings in watertight bulkheads and down the shoulder-wide alley, until they were heaped like a collapsed Rugby scrum in the aftermost compartment. Then, for some unknown reason, the submarine rose to the surface. Nothing could stop her, and we lay for a brief period in sight of an armed patrol vessel. Then we went into another steep dive, which I again managed

ON THE ANZIO BEACH-HEAD, day and night, showers of anti-personnel bombs sent down by the Luftwaffe failed to shift these British gunners, who had dug for themselves holes to which, with the unfailing humour of our troops, they gave such names as "Sea View" (left). One of the many guns (right) which, with a concentration of fire seldom equalled in this war, smashed the German attacks; it is a 5·5 in. manned by the Royal Artillery. See story above. *Photos, British Official*

to check when we were very deep indeed—and more depth charges came down.

We corrected the trim, with most of the crew placed forward this time, and the Stubborn, proceeding on her port motor, with her bow up at an angle of 25 degrees, was headed to make a rush through the minefield. We got along like that for a time, until the rate of rise got out of control, and we broke surface again. This time we were seen by the minesweeper which was only a mile and a half away. We dived with the utmost speed and went down and down, out of control. The ultimate figure on the depth gauge was passed; the needle stuck, and we were still going down.

And here the Guardian Angel stepped in and provided an entirely unexpected sea bottom. A study of the chart shows no shallow patch in the deep waters anywhere in that vicinity. But we had no doubt that we had touched bottom, because the Stubborn bumped on the sea-bed four times before she came to rest with a nine degrees bow-down angle. Many more depth charges were dropped very close, so that the boat was lifted off the bottom by the force of the explosions, but that was the last we heard of the enemy . . .

Lieutenant Duff waited until it was dark before he tried to move, and then it was found that the Stubborn was firmly stuck. The after-hydroplanes had fallen off, but the starboard propeller had freed itself. Attempts were made to get her off stern first and rock her free by running the crew about, but all failed. By now the pressure of air inside the submarine was abnormally high, and Lieutenant Duff decided to run his main air compression, drawing air from inside the boat—a very unusual procedure. In this way he pumped up an air group to 3,000 lb. per square inch and was able to pull the submarine off the sea bed. Continuing his story:

She shot up at an angle of 70 degrees. I was lying flat on the conning tower ladder. Everyone was slung in a heap. But we surfaced all right and steamed as fast as we could away from the enemy coast. The ordeal was by no means over. On the following afternoon her rudder suddenly failed to answer the wheel. She lay helpless in enemy-patrolled waters, and it was blowing a gale. The boat lay beam on to the sea, rolling horribly. I ordered a sail to be rigged to the periscope standard, hoping that would bring the ship's head to sea. But in a few seconds the canvas was torn to ribbons.

Only at this stage did the Stubborn send a signal for help. Destroyers were sent immediately, but the weather was so bad that it was two days before they were able to sight the stricken submarine. Then, for six hours, they could not take her in tow because the weather was too bad. They had to wait until it moderated sufficiently to get the tow line made fast. Eventually, this was done after dark—a fine feat of seamanship by both craft—and they steamed away from the danger zone. When the Stubborn had been in tow for eight hours the cable parted. But now Lieut. Duff's experiments in steering without a rudder were rewarded, because the Stubborn was able to proceed under her own power at about 7½ knots and carry out an efficient zig-zag as though under continuous helm. She steamed thus for about 300 miles and then she was taken in tow again and brought safely home.

H.M. SUBMARINE STUBBORN lived up to her name in one of the most remarkable patrols of the war. She is here seen coming home, escorted by the Norwegian destroyer Narvik, passing a cheering crowd of sailors aboard her depot ship H.M.S. Forth. See facing page for commencement of the story of her adventures. *Photo, British Official*

OUR DIARY OF THE WAR

MARCH 15, Wednesday *1,656th day*

Italy.—Cassino attacked with 1,400 tons of bombs; every unit of Mediterranean Air Force in action.

Russian Front.—Kalinovka, Turbov, Voronovitsa, Trostinets, Obodovka, and Olgopol in Vinnitsa sector captured by Russians.

Australasia.—American troops landed on Manus Island in the Admiralties.

Air.—Brunswick bombed by Fortresses and Liberators for seventh time. Stuttgart and Munich attacked by over 1,000 aircraft at night.

MARCH 16, Thursday *1,657th day*

Italy.—Three-quarters of Cassino occupied by 5th Army troops. Castle Hill, N. of the town, captured.

Russian Front.—Vapnyarka taken by troops of 2nd Ukrainian Front. Nemirov, Voroshilovka, and Bobrinets captured.

Air.—Clermont-Ferrand, 30 miles S.W. of Vichy, attacked at night with 12,000-lb. bombs. Amiens raided.

MARCH 17, Friday *1,658th day*

Italy.—Cassino railway station captured by New Zealand troops of 5th Army.

Russian Front.—Dubno, Demidovka, and Targowica captured by Marshal Zhukov's troops.

Burma.—Announced landings made by British airborne troops in N. Burma and by British and W. African troops on coast of Arakan, 15 miles below Razavil. Chinese operating under Gen. Stilwell captured Tingkawk Sakan.

General.—Finnish Government rejected Russia's armistice terms.

MARCH 18, Saturday *1,659th day*

Russian Front.—Zhmerinka, on Odessa-Lwow railway, captured by 1st Ukrainian Army. Yampol and Pomoshnaya taken by 2nd Ukrainian Army. Liquidation of German Sixth Army on Lower Bug Front announced.

Australasia.—Lorengau, Japanese base on Manus Island, taken by U.S. troops.

Air.—Oberpfofenhoffen, Lechfeld, Landsberg, Friedrichshafen and Augsburg hit in great day attack by over 1,500 U.S. bombers and fighters. At night, 1,000 bombers went to Frankfurt and Bérgerac.

Sea.—Loss of destroyer Mahratta announced by Board of Admiralty.

MARCH 19, Sunday *1,660th day*

Russian Front.—Krzemieniec, 20 miles inside 1939 Polish frontier, captured by troops of 1st Ukrainian Front. River Dniester forced along a stretch of 30 miles by Marshal Koniev. Soroka and Zhelanets occupied.

Australasia.—Emerau Island, 84 miles N.W. of Kavieng, invaded by U.S. troops.

Burma.—Announced that major offensive launched by Japanese troops in the Chindwin Valley along Indian frontier.

Sea.—Announced that in recent operations extending over 20 days in N. Atlantic six U-boats sunk by five British sloops under command of Capt. F. J. Walker, C.B., D.S.O. (two bars).

MARCH 20, Monday *1,661st day*

Russian Front.—Mogilev-Podolski, on the Dniester, and Vinnitsa, on the Bug, captured by Marshals Koniev and Zhukov.

Australasia.—Occupation of Emerau Is., N.W. of Kavieng, New Ireland, completed by American assault troops.

General.—Pierre Pucheu, former Vichy Minister of the Interior, executed.

MARCH 21, Tuesday *1,662nd day*

Russian Front.—Cernauti-Balti railway cut in Red Army southern offensive.

Home Front.—Many incendiaries dropped in fire attack on London.

Burma.—Fall of Jambubum and Sumprabum in northern Burma announced.

MARCH 22, Wednesday *1,663rd day*

Russian Front.—Pervomaisk, on River Bug, captured by 2nd Ukrainian Front troops.

Air.—Berlin attacked in daylight by Fortresses and Liberators. In greatest raid of the war, 3,000 tons dropped on Frankfurt at night by Lancasters and Halifaxes.

General.—German occupation of Hungary, reported to have begun on March 19, completed. Resignation of Hungarian Govt. announced. Hungarian Ambassador in Berlin, A. Sztojay, appointed Premier.

MARCH 23, Thursday *1,664th day*

Russian Front.—Kapuchnitsy and Tremblova taken on the southern front.

Air.—Hamm rail-junction, Achmer and Handorf air bases, Munster and Brunswick factories, bombed by over 1,000 U.S. planes. Rail targets at Laon, and objectives at Lyons raided at night. Mosquitoes attacked Dortmund.

MARCH 24, Friday *1,665th day*

Italy.—Announced Germans had regained a quarter of Cassino.

Russian Front.—Announced that in five days' fighting troops of the 1st Ukrainian Front had broken German defences in the Tarnopol-Proskurov sector and advanced up to 60 miles. Czorkov, Gusiatyn and Zaleszczyk taken.

Home Front.—Intense flak barrage defeated enemy incendiary raid on London.

MARCH 25, Saturday *1,666th day*

Russian Front.—Proskurov, great German bastion in western Ukraine, fell to Marshal Zhukov. Fifty mile stretch of River Dniester reached above Mogilev-Podolski.

Burma.—Capture of Shaduzup in the Mogaung Valley by U.S. and Chinese troops announced.

Air.—Aulnoye rail targets (N. France) and objectives in Lyons area attacked at night. Berlin bombed.

MARCH 26, Sunday *1,667th day*

Russian Front.—Troops of 2nd Ukrainian Army reached the State frontier of the Soviet Union with Rumania, the River Pruth, on a front of 50 miles. Balti and Kamenets Podolski captured.

Air.—Military installations in Pas de Calais and Cherbourg areas, and E-boat nests at Ymuiden (Holland) bombed. At night, Essen subjected to saturation attack; Hanover and Courtrai (Belgium) attacked.

General.—Mr. Churchill said that the "hour of greatest effort and action is approaching."

MARCH 27, Monday *1,668th day*

Russian Front.—Soviet troops entered suburbs of Nikolayev. Gorodenka taken.

Burma.—Announced that Allied troops were in rear of enemy in Upper Burma, under command of Maj.-Gen. O. C. Wingate.

Air.—Nine airfields in central and S.W. France attacked by Fortresses and Liberators. Tours marshalling yards raided.

MARCH 28, Tuesday *1,669th day*

Russian Front.—Nikolayev, important Black Sea naval base and German strongpoint on the southern Bug, captured by 3rd Ukrainian Army. Slobodka, on main line from Odessa to Zmerinka; Gvozdets, district centre of Stanislavov region; Minkousti, and Chelmenti in Cernauti area, taken by Soviet troops.

Air.—French airfields of Dijon, Chartres, and Chateaudun bombed.

Flash-backs

1940

March 15. *Finns ratified peace terms with Russia at Helsinki.*

1941

March 16. *Berbera, capital of British Somaliland, recaptured.*

March 20. *British Somaliland cleared of Italian troops.*

March 27. *Harar, Abyssinia, taken by 11th African Division.*

1942

March 22. *Three-day Axis sea and air attack on Malta-bound convoy in Mediterranean commenced.*

1943

March 15. *Russians evacuated industrial city of Kharkov.*

March 20. *Assault on Mareth Line positions by 8th Army.*

March 27. *Fondouk, Tunisia, taken by American troops.*

March 28. *Mareth, Toujane, and Matmata captured by 8th Army.*

THE WAR IN THE AIR

by Capt. Norman Macmillan, M.C., A.F.C.

No operation in this war has been more novel and spectacular than the dispatch of a strong force by air into the heart of Northern Burma, where it alighted behind the Japanese "lines" within the area under "control" of the Far Eastern enemy. The operation was carried out by towed gliders and troop transport aircraft. This form of attack was strategically first employed by the German Army during the offensive against Holland and Belgium in 1940. The scene of the first glider attack was the fort of Eben-Emael, which the Belgians had built during the years between the wars to cover the approaches to the three vital bridges that spanned the Albert Canal.

As with the British defences at Singapore, the Belgian defences of fort Eben-Emael anticipated attack from a certain direction. Both these great fortresses were built before the rapid development of air power which followed the tremendous technical advances made during the past decade. And both fell to attack from the quarter whence it had been supposed not to be possible.

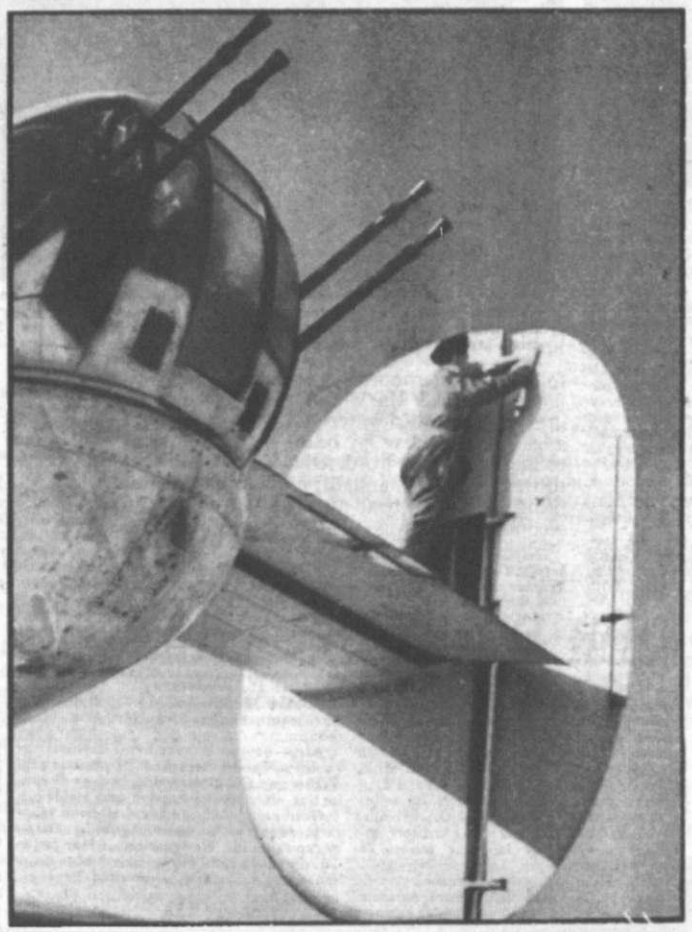
GLIDER-BORNE Troops Landed on Fort-Top

The Belgian fort was put out of action within thirty-six hours of the beginning of the main German assault upon the Low Countries and France by glider-borne troops who descended in the night behind and even on top of the fort and who were reinforced by parachute troops. The bridge guards were attacked not from the front but from the rear. The German armies poured over the bridges and the great, or rather supposedly great, bastion of the Albert Canal proved almost valueless, due to the employment of new strategical and tactical methods of war.

But nothing of any importance in modes of war has been introduced by the Germans which has not swiftly been seized upon by the Allies and bettered. The Germans failed because they did not believe sufficiently in their new methods. One can perceive in case after case that the torpid mind of military orthodoxy interfered with the more advanced thinkers in the German military hierarchy. It is well for the world that it was so, or we should not now have turned the tables on our foe; there would have been no time to do so.

And so the Germans who first used the glider as a means of taking troops into battle made provision for this form of military transport on so small a scale that their victories won by novel methods left them dry of resources sufficient to sweep them on to complete victory. What would have been the fate of Britain in 1940 had Germany possessed a great fleet of gliders that could have alighted in the darkness in numerous parts of Britain? It is sheer speculation to guess at the effect, but undoubtedly the war would not have gone as it has gone for us. We should have known the meaning of fighting in our own homeland.

Now nearly four years later, a great airborne force was landed within the heart of Northern Burma by gliders, complete with all sorts of equipment for turning fields marked out for the initial landings into airfields suitable for the use of troop transport aircraft. And that meant no small parcels of equipment. Troop transport aircraft require considerable fore-and-aft and lateral room to alight. The approaches to the actual alighting area must be reasonably good, especially for night landings, for no air commander wishes unnecessarily to have excessive crashes which cost lives and block the runways and approaches with wreckage which takes time to remove, and in Burma may set the jungle alight from petrol fires and throw well-laid plans awry.



BACK FROM ATLANTIC PATROL, aircraft of R.A.F. Coastal Command get routine inspection; here the tail unit of a Liberator is being overhauled. American-built, its wing span is 110 ft., length 64 ft., height 17 ft. 11 ins. Its speed is 335 m.p.h. at 16,000 ft. and its range 3,000 miles. The bomb load is 8,000 lbs. *Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright*

A modern military airfield is not just simply a place to land. It must have proper control over flying with signals organization, lighting for night landings, radio communication with bases and with aircraft in flight, telephone communication between one part and another of the widely dispersed area (so dispersed for security against bomb attacks), and runway surfaces which will carry modern aircraft weighing anything up to twenty tons. These cannot be conjured out of the jungle. The materials and appliances to create the airfield must be transported to the spot. And that was done in the case of General Wingate's airborne expedition in Northern Burma.

If for any reason such an expedition were to fail to provide itself quickly with an efficient airfield, it would be so severely handicapped as to jeopardize its capacity to hit the enemy, or even to survive. For, surrounded by enemy forces, it depends upon air transport for its supplies of food and ammunition, weapons, medical requirements, evacuation of wounded and sick, and all the hundred-and-one details of a modern military command. Such supplies cannot continue to come in by glider; for there is a limit to the number of gliders that may be used in one operation, because the gliders can only return whence they came if air-tugs can get down to tow them off again, or unless the runways are of sufficient length and width to enable tugs to hook up the gliders from the ground while on the wing. But even the last-named method does not solve the problem, for it is certain that in air operations of this kind a large number of gliders will be damaged in landing and so cannot be returned to their starting points by air.

CRASH-LANDING Safely in Confined Spaces

It is imperative to get an airfield into operation with the minimum delay and to provide for the adequate protection of that airfield. This means that a fighter force must fly in as soon as possible to give air cover, for in the case of the Burma air expedition, the scene of operations was too distant from airfields in India for adequate air cover to be provided from them. Soon one airfield is not enough. Satellite airfields are required to allow for dispersal in the event of enemy air attack succeeding in breaking through the fighter screen, so that the temporary damaging of one airfield will not hold up the stream of supplies and reinforcements. In this way, by the use of air transports, a really big army can be built up in an area where the enemy may have hoped that he was in occupation.

Why, it may be asked, are gliders used for the initial operation? Why not use air transports straight away? The answer is that gliders can be crash-landed in comparatively small spaces with relative safety to their occupants. They have no hot engines and lubricating oils or petrol to catch fire when they crash-land. They can be more lightly built, so that if they begin to disintegrate there are fewer heavy parts to cause injury to the occupants. And they are far easier and quicker to build than air transports, requiring a relative handful of man-hours for their production compared with a power-driven air transport. Moreover, two or more gliders can be towed by one air-tug, so that a large force can be flown in quickly. And the gliders can get down in rapid succession one after another.

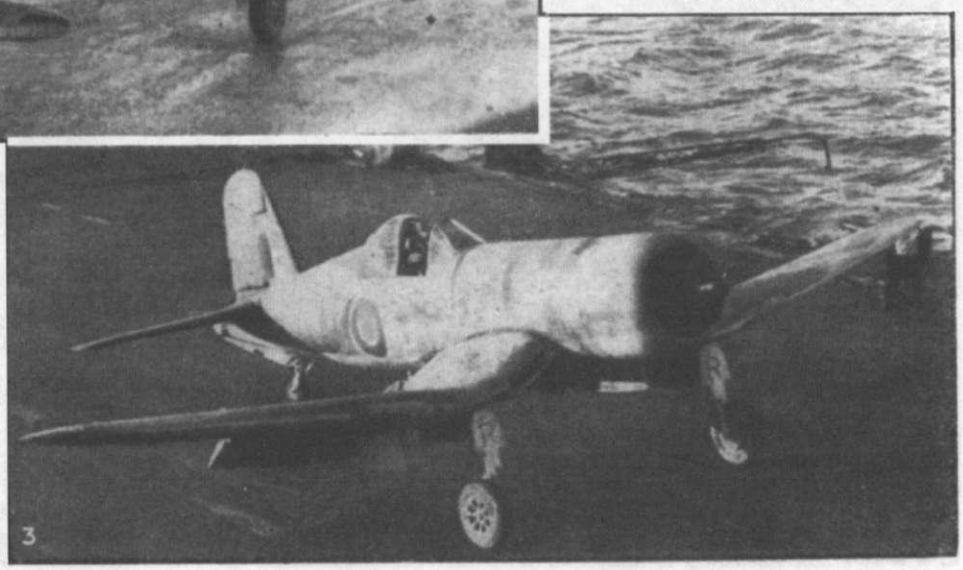
Our admiration should go to the pilots who steered their gliders through the night skies over the jungle hills of Burma, for flying a towed glider is no easy ride. The glider strains and yaws on the end of its silk nylon rope as it follows the wake of its tug, heaves in the air, and makes great lunges about the sky. It is in no way a "willing" tow. It is so much dead-weight, a troop-packed engineless aircraft the safety of whose freight is absolutely dependent on skilful handling. Pilots have to work hard to keep them on their course. Certainly these glider pilots who landed in Burma have made their mark in military history.

Corsair is the Fleet Air Arm's Latest Fighter

THE CORSAIR PILOTS had put in months of hard training for the great day when their squadron should join the carrier. Some had carried out deck-landing training at an airfield in America, then perfecting landings on the flight-deck of a carrier before returning to England to start their operational careers in real earnest.

The plane that crashed (1). The pilot was unhurt and his aircraft was removed by the self-propelling crane seen in the background. A Corsair on the deck-landing area (3) starts to taxi away; folding its wings (2), it will then enter the lift which will bear it down into the hangar.

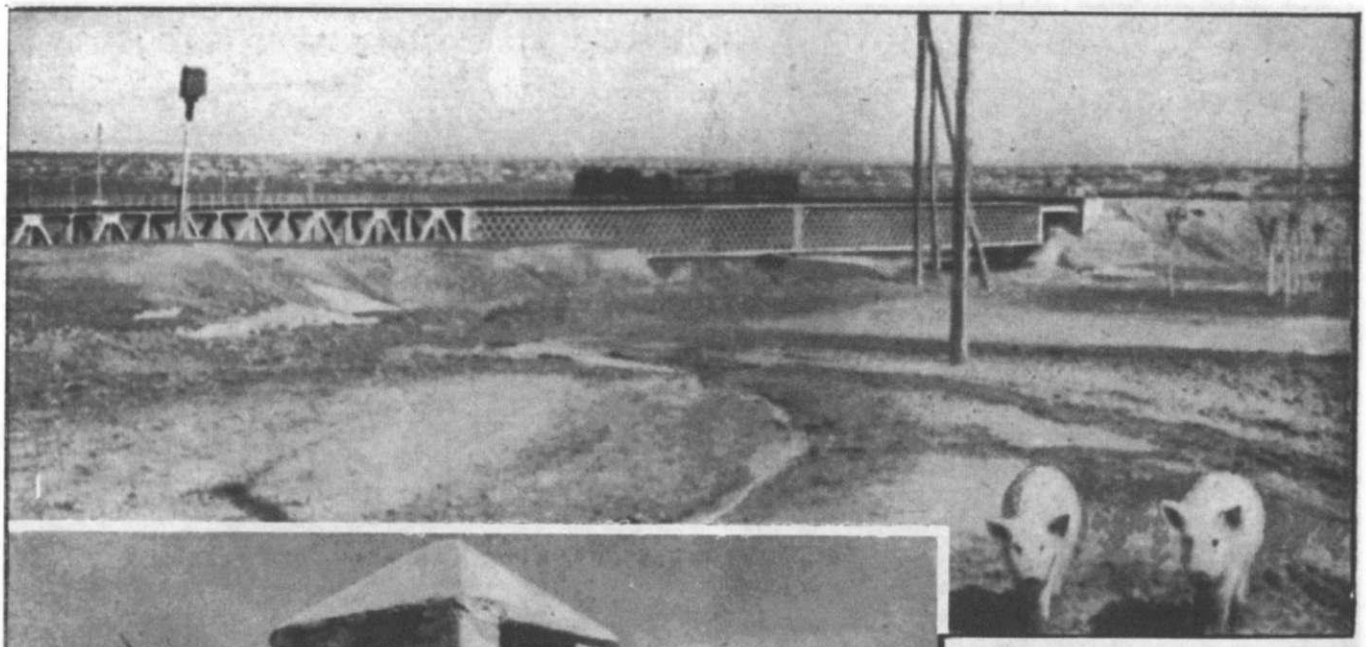
Photos, British Official



LATEST ADDITION to our air striking power at sea is the American-built Vought-Sikorsky Corsair aircraft, a single-seater ship-board fighter powered with a 1,850 h.p. Pratt-Hind Whitney Double Wasp engine; wing-span 40 feet, length 30 feet.

A notable event was the day recently on which a complete squadron of these planes joined a British aircraft carrier off the north-west coast of Scotland: the first operational Fleet Air Arm squadron, equipped with the new Corsairs, were to make their first landings on a British flight-deck. The superstructure and gun wells of the carrier were crowded with officers and ratings as the leading Corsair came in to alight. Apart from one which crashed on the flight-deck as the result of a miscalculation on its pilot's part, all made perfect landings.

Rumania and Hungary Now in Parlous Plight



GERMAN MILITARY OCCUPATION of Hungary, reported to have begun on March 19, 1944, was complete by March 22. In Rumania, German forces were considerably strengthened from Austria. To the east, the Red Army were over the Dniester and had reached points less than 25 miles from the Rumanian frontier.

Gains secured by Hungary at the expense of Rumania, Slovakia and Yugoslavia as reward for her participation in Germany's war are now of no account; her fate is comparable with that of Rumania, whose men were sacrificed before Odessa, Sebastopol and in the Caucasus.

Concrete fortifications along the Hungarian frontier (3) are today of as little value to Hungary as was the Maginot Line to France. On the lower Dniester, 32 miles east of Kishinev, the Tighina Bridge (1) links Bessarabia with Russia; at Tiraspol, 8 miles from Tighina, this Rumanian sentry (2) keeps anxious watch. See map in p. 677.

Photos, Muir

Editor's Postscript

BASIC English is receiving a very considerable amount of attention at present, thanks to Mr. Churchill's interest in it, and I think that from the point of view of international relationships it is most desirable that this should be so. I would point out, however, that Basic English can be of no conceivable use to an Englishman who has learned his native tongue in the natural way that all native tongues are learned, and it would be a truly terrifying prospect for English literature if our schools were to teach British boys and girls only the limited vocabulary which the inventor of Basic English has contrived for the expression of all ordinary thoughts on the common affairs of life. On the other hand, the study of foreign languages—and here again more from the commercial point of view than the literary—presented on the principles of Basic English is going to be of immense importance in the future and might well result in making the English, who are not notably gifted in foreign languages, quite a polyglot people. I cannot imagine, however, that Basic English will ever be popular with the coloured citizens of the United States, who have a passion for using long and sonorous words. A friend of mine tells a story of travelling in the Southern States and having some doubt about arriving at a junction in time to catch another train. He discussed it with the Negro conductor, who set his mind at rest with these consoling words. "Believe me, Sah, you can eliminate the possibility of any such contingency occurring."

I HOPE everyone who reads this is doing all he or she can do to make the "Salute the Soldier" weeks surpass in their financial result the efforts that were so successful in providing money for ships and aircraft. A good start has been made and the collection will go on until July ends. We must make the total a lot higher than the earlier drives for the war fund yielded, satisfactory though they were, all things considered. Now we have an incentive to invest in War Savings of all kinds which did not exist before. We can feel it is the last effort we shall have to make before the enemy's strength is broken in Europe. After that there will be Japan, it is true; but victory on this side of the world will release enormous quantities of men and women and armaments, and the cost of the war will be somewhat less burdensome. Apart from the sums that will be raised to meet this burden, it is a very good thing that the Army should be publicized a bit more than it has been during this war. We used in the past to hear only of Tommy Atkins. The Navy was the "silent Service." The Air Force didn't exist. Now both the sailors and the airmen tend to overshadow the soldier. It is time the balance was restored.

I HAVE known British generals with all sorts of queer habits—or I should say habits that seemed queer in British generals. I never knew one who learned poems and enjoyed repeating them to himself. That is Field Marshal Wavell's hobby, and he has let us know what are the poems he likes best by publishing a book of them. It is not surprising that he rates Kipling very highly among his favourites, but it is surprising that he admits to not caring for Tennyson. I should have thought anybody who liked the one Victorian poet would be keen on the other. They had much the same qualities, metrical perfection among others, and a sort of super-Man-in-the-Street mentality. You may wonder at my calling Kipling a Victorian. But if you look back over his work, you will see that he made his name during the reign of the old Queen, and it was just about the time she died that he had his very dangerous illness in America and only just scraped through, with the result that never afterwards did his work appear to have quite the same vigour and distinction. His "Soldiers Three" were soldiers of the Queen, and his finest poem, "Recessional," was inspired by his reflections on her Diamond Jubilee. I hope the Viceroy of India (Lord Wavell assumed this appointment on Oct. 20, 1943) does not recite Kipling to Indians, by the way!

Lieut.-General SIR THOMAS RALPH EASTWOOD, K.C.B., D.S.O., M.C., arrived at Gibraltar on Feb. 27, 1944, to assume his new duties as Governor and C.-in-C. of the "Rock." Born in 1890, he was Director-General Home Guard 1940-41, and G.O.C.-in-C. Northern Command from 1941. He is 53 years old, and fought in Samoa, Egypt, Gallipoli and France in the 1914-18 war.
Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright

I DON'T know how it is now, but in the old Tsarist Russia there used to be Black Markets for all kinds of things, long before we heard of them here. If you wanted tickets for the Imperial Ballet, for instance, you were often told at the box-office that none were to be had; but they could always be bought just round the corner from a speculator. Same with railway reservations. At the station ticket-offices you would be told no places were vacant, but there were people ready to sell you what you wanted at a slightly increased price. Now I am told by a friend just back from America that this bad practice which once flourished in a despotic State has invaded the most democratic of countries. Pullman sleepers are cornered and sold by outside speculators because there is such a run on them. Trains are crammed, a large proportion of the travellers being men in uniform, though that was not true of the crowd marooned in Florida, rich holiday-makers who had to queue up day after day for weeks and return in conditions they described as "horrifying." If you have a long distance to go, you must have a Pullman or else arrive utterly worn and weary at your destination. And the Pullmans are being taken off many trains to save space.

WHETHER hospitals "supported by voluntary contributions" will keep going when the new Health scheme promised by the Government comes into force seems to be doubtful. Those who have been the most liberal subscribers to them in the past are not likely to be able to afford that luxury in the future. The New Rich do not support charities as the Old Rich did. For the inheritors of wealth it was a tradition that they should set aside a certain sum every year for "charities." Those who have made fortunes seldom feel any urge or obligation to do that. A few like Lord Nuffield give enormous amounts, but generally speaking the charities find it more and more difficult to collect money. Those whom they succeed in tapping are for the most part a stage army. Their names figure in a great many lists and they are continually approached by the compilers of other lists who want them to extend their benefactions. It is a "vicious" circle, if I may so describe it without decrying the objects on which the money is spent. The appearance of your name in one or two annual reports leads to your being urged to figure in a lot more. I have experienced this myself. Evidently the supporters of charities are very limited in number and becoming more so.

ONE of the military terms that have come into general use of late, as "terrain" did during the last war, is "logistics." This hideous monstrosity of verbiage comes, I believe, from the French originally. The derivation is from *loger* and it means anything to do with the lodgment of soldiers. The smaller Oxford Dictionary says "The art of moving and quartering troops." I suppose it is useful to have a portmanteau expression of this nature to hold what might otherwise have to be a bulky string of words, but I wish we could hit on something more in keeping with our own language. The equivalent might seem to be "quartering," since the French for our "quartermaster" is "maréchal de logis"; but that would not include the movement of troops, and usually that is what logistics has to do with in the writings of military correspondents. Not many people who come across it can have any idea of its meaning. Perhaps that is why there are some writers who like to use it as often as they can.

THE M.P. who wants the Army to be supplied with mackintoshes ought to be told that these garments are called "waterproofs" in War Office parlance—or at any rate used to be until a short time ago. Probably the reason is that they existed and were worn by soldiers of high rank before the term "mackintosh" came into circulation. It was in 1823 that a Mr. Charles Macintosh (spelt without the "k") hailing from the Scottish Highlands, patented the rubberized coat or cloak which is supposed to keep out even heavy, persistent rain. It was called after him, as the sandwich took the name of the earl who first had slices of meat put between slices of bread, and the Garibaldi biscuit that of the Italian patriot general who kept his troops going strong on raisins sandwiched between pieces of hard baked maize flour.

They Will Help Naples to Rise Again

SCHOOL ONCE MORE has become part of the everyday lives of these kiddies, shepherded by their teacher through a ruin-bordered street of Naples, which the 5th Army cleared of the enemy on Oct. 1, 1943. With textbooks supplied by the Allied Military Government, schools in all liberated Italian towns and cities are resuming the education of the rising generation; this time with instruction founded on sane lines, untainted by those insidious doctrines formerly taught.

Photo, U.S. Official

Printed in England and published every alternate Friday by the Proprietors, THE AMALGAMATED PRESS, LTD., The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4. Registered for transmission by Canadian Magazine Post. Sole Agents for Australia and New Zealand: Messrs. Gordon & Gotch, Ltd.; and for South Africa: Central News Agency, Ltd.—April 14, 1944. S.S.

Editorial Address: JOHN CARPENTER HOUSE, WHITEFRIARS, LONDON, E.C.4.